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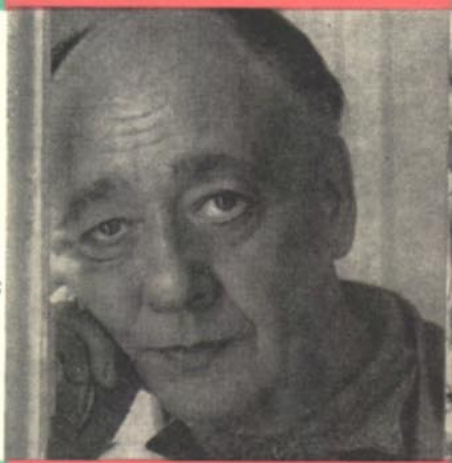

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EUGÈNE IONESCO JOURNAL

BOND IN RUSSIA LE CARRÉ

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Teaching Machine

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Pavese without God

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Edith Sitwell at Home

Robert Graves
Language Levels

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The Great Vowel Shift

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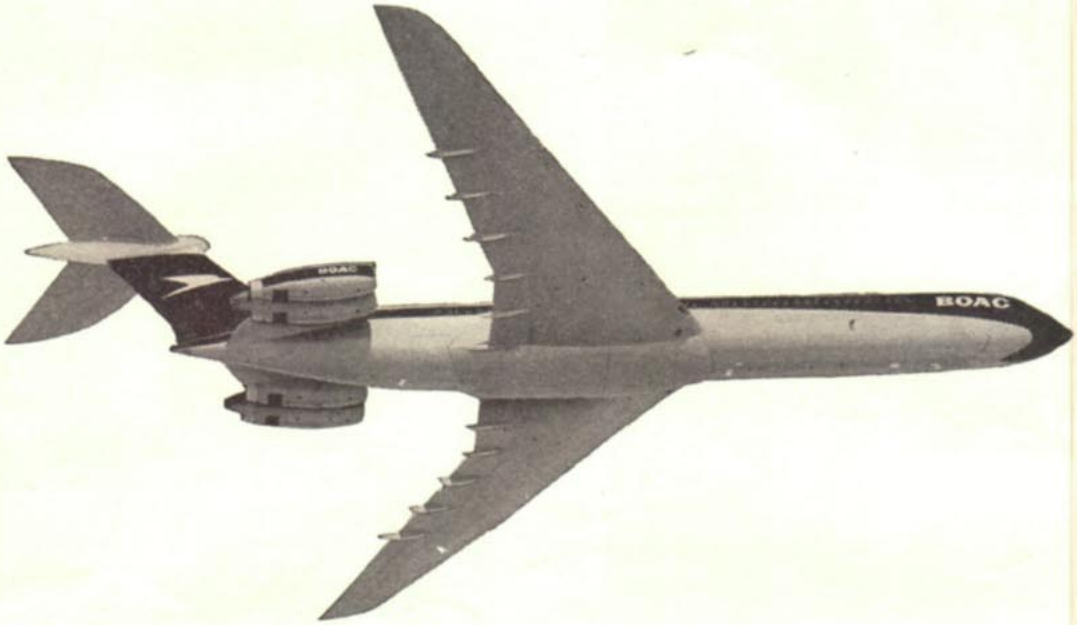

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John Le Carré

To Russia, with Greetings

An Open Letter to the Moscow "Literary Gazette"

The Editor, Literaturnaya Gazeta,
Tsvetnoi Boulevard 30, Moscow 1–51.

Sir,

After the publication of *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* in many languages and countries, I waited hopefully for a reaction from the Communist bloc. The more so, perhaps, because of the widely differing reactions I had already received from readers in America, some of whom charged me with writing a "pro-Communist" book. My literary agent needed some persuading before he approached the Soviet Union and other East European countries. For the record: Rumania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary declined the book without comment. Poland took the precaution of protecting even her publishers from its odious qualities: a Polish publishing house twice reported that it had not received my agent's copy, adding in its second letter the injunction: "We suppose not to risk again with sending it." One Balkan editor excised the passages he found most obnoxious and returned the remnants. It was a little like recovering one's shirt from a faulty washing machine.

With profound surprise, therefore, I read the article in your issue of 14 October 1965, in which a Russian critic discusses my work. There are many questions I would ask of your contributor, Mr. Voinov, just as he—judging by his bewilderment—would be grateful for my own clarifications. I suppose I would like him to tell me what is the value of reviewing books which his readers will never be allowed to see? What is his purpose in warning them against an evil of which they would otherwise be ignorant? But perhaps I had better be grateful that my work was noticed at all, and confine myself to the content of Mr. Voinov's article.

Mr. Voinov observes, rightly I think, that I have little good to say of the British power structure, or of the morals of British intelligence, and he notes with commendable accuracy that I have little good to say of the Communist system either. He says—what could be nicer?—that realism and cleverness distinguish my books from those of the late Ian Fleming, and he implies (precisely as the *Daily Worker* has recently implied) that the poison is more deadly. Why? Mr. Voinov reserved this judgment to the end, but it is none the less vehement: I am an "apologist of the cold war." What does he mean? As far as I can understand, his actual charge is based on two counts:

1. That I assume the role of impartial observer while my real function is "to fan the flames of the cold war."
2. That I elevate the spy to the "rank of true hero of our age."

Mr. Voinov's second objection, concerning the heroic status of the spy, is already out of date: I can do no better than refer him to recent events in his own country. These are worth recounting in some detail.

On 5 November 1964 Richard Sorge was awarded the supreme decoration of "Hero of the Soviet Union." A Moscow street, a Russian tanker, and a four-Kopek stamp now all commemorate his name. The two Soviet Military Intelligence Officers, Berzin and Borovich, who

JOHN LE CARRÉ (*whose real name is David Cornwell*) *is the author of* The Spy Who Came in from the Cold—*it has just been made into a film—and, more recently,* The Looking-Glass War. © *1966 La Carré Productions Ltd.*

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controlled Sorge have, like their agent, received posthumous recognition. What truer hero is there than a Soviet hero, and what better spy than Sorge?

Sorge's recognition was in many senses historic: not only his soul was ennobled, but also his profession. "A Spy is above all a man of politics . . . he must have the breadth of thought of a strategist, and meticulous powers of observation. Espionage is a continuous and demanding labour which never ceases"—thus wrote one of Sorge's Soviet admirers.

In February of this year, another Soviet Spy hero was appointed: none other than Colonel Rudolf Abel, Member of the Order of Lenin, after thirty years' service as a spy, five of which were spent in an American gaol. He, too, has burst into song on the glories of his trade. Spying, he wrote, "is a careful and difficult labour demanding great powers, attention, persistence, will, self-control, serious knowledge and great skill."

These two events alone should be enough to convince Voinov that he is marching out of step in objecting to the image of the spy hero, but there is currently a great deal more of the same stuff. Only recently Moscow bookshops were filled with an unique publication: the diaries of one Molody, better known to us as Gordon Lonsdale, which recount how Lonsdale, super-spy, makes havoc of decadent British society. In many ways, I prefer Lonsdale to Bond, but I do find his vanity a little exhausting.

Now I am the last person to blame Voinov for ignoring current trends in Soviet political thought; the events which have overtaken him are of very recent date. For fifteen years or more after the war your Intelligence Service and ours believed that in the public mind only Counter-Intelligence was respectable. Each side spoke with horror of the treachery of the other, each spoke proudly of its own vigilance in frustrating the efforts of hostile spies and saboteurs, but maintained the fiction that it abstained from aggressive espionage.

Gradually, two things happened. First, a great number of espionage operations went wrong and excited public ridicule and concern. Traitors from both sides were too loud to be ignored: Gouzenko, Petrov, Penkovsky and a string of others from the East; Martin and Mitchell, Burgess and MacLean, Philby and Blake from the West. (Why do ours always seem to run in pairs?) One fiasco after another reverberated on either side of the Iron Curtain. There was nothing either bloc could effectively do to check public knowledge of the scope, and often folly, of contemporary Intelligence Agencies. At the diplomatic level, of course, nothing was said. Each side met the protests of the other with glacial denial. There were odd lapses, like Mr. Khrushchev's observation to Mr. Allen Dulles that they were running "the same spies." But in the main, statesmen acted out to one another a lie they had long ceased to pass off on the people.

In the West particularly, where scandals are aired pretty freely, there was increasing public concern about what was being done in our name. In books, newspaper articles, and even in our Parliaments and at the United Nations, we gave expression to our apprehensions about the power and the operation of Western Secret Services. Yet something very strange was happening. At a time when our newspapers were filled with descriptions of seduced housewives, corrupted diplomats, and treacherous service officers, of all that lonely riff-raff, in fact, which in reality haunts the desert world of espionage, the public fled to the gilded dream of James Bond, super-spy. Bond had money, enemies, and girls, and some doctrine or other which enabled him to hop over the ordinary standards of morality. In literature at least, the West had achieved the most spectacular feat of doublethink.

THIS LESSON was not lost to your own counsellors: Intelligence Services, far from having to operate in a state of illusory secrecy, can occupy a vital place in the Russian public imagination. In doing such extravagant honour to one dead spy, Richard Sorge, and in publishing Lonsdale's diaries, Soviet Intelligence had taken a calculated step; it is chasing the Bond Image.

If you think me facetious, consider the kind of hero you have in Richard Sorge.

He was recruited in peace-time; he was deployed against countries with which the Soviet Union was not at war; he devoted all his talents, all his philosophical conviction to a life of solitary deceit. It is these qualities which your country has honoured. Sorge's life ended, of course, during the second World War, and his achievements, spectacular as they might be, were not needed in a High Command riddled with Stalinist suspicion. Would the Soviet Union have made less of him if he had func-

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tioned only in the *cold war*? No indeed; there are modern Sorges. Look at Lonsdale.

Sorge, you remember, implicated others in his work, and led them to their death. This too, apparently, your country has condoned. Your country, like mine, chooses its heroes as an example to the community. Precisely what example did Richard Sorge set? Surely we need no longer deceive ourselves: he is the first Russian hero of the secret war. His weapons have been legitimised, his mission sanctified, and you have wisely, like the Church before you, chosen a martyr for the job. Sorge's recruitment dates, let me emphasise, from a period when by common consent British Intelligence was disgracefully dormant. He belongs to the great triumphs of Russian espionage in the 'thirties, when young men, some of them English, many still at university, were so filled with ideological zeal, so dismayed by the rise of fascism in Europe, that they chose this most arduous of means to defend the working-class movement. He is of the same vintage, and perhaps the same stamp, as Donald MacLean. All that he achieved in his later life resulted from his timely recruitment as a young man, which no doubt applies to Gordon Lonsdale and Rudolf Abel.

They, I suppose, are to be honoured under Sorge's star: here are living, contemporary exponents of the example set by Sorge. Lonsdale corrupted an English housewife and she has gone to prison; when the English corrupted Penkovsky, incidentally, he was shot. These are small points of method: the principle is the same. In the acquisition of intelligence, the weak and even the innocent must suffer; but heroism is the anaesthetic. From the example of Sorge we know definitely what in the past we could only deduce from Lenin: that the Communist Party regards espionage as a fitting profession for a hero. With Sorge, Abel and Lonsdale as his guides, the young Russian may venture into Soviet Intelligence with as clear a conscience as he would enter the army.

Allow me now to return to the first of Mr. Voinov's charges: that I fan the flames of the cold war.

IN THE BOOK of mine which occupies the larger part of his review (*The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*) I have equated, in hypothetical terms, the conduct of East and West in the espionage war. I have suggested that they use the same weapons—deceit—and even the same spies (a point Mr. Khrushchev made long before I did). To ram the message home, I chose some rather obvious paradoxes. The functionaries in opposing intelligence services feel closer to one another than to their own controllers. A man who is in the pay of *both* intelligence services is a particularly odious ex-Nazi. The central character in the book loves two people and both are Jews: by indulging his decent instincts, he destroys them both. I used Jewish people because I felt that after Stalin and Hitler they should particularly engage our protective instincts.

By these and other means I sought to remove espionage from the sterile arguments of the cold war and concentrate the reader's eye on the cost to the West, in moral terms, of fighting the legitimised weapons of Communism. For this reason, my Western agent is at a loss to defend himself in ideological dispute with his Communist interrogator. The Communist *should* be able to reconcile the loss of innocent life with the progress of the proletarian revolution; Western man can't. I tried to tickle the public conscience with the issue of *raison d'état*. I have posed this question: for how long can we defend ourselves—you and we—by methods of this kind, and still remain the kind of society that is worth defending? I suggested that in this respect the Communist argument is clearer than that of the West because it sees the progress of humanity in collective terms. To a Communist, there is henceforth nothing shabby in contributing to this progress with the means which Sorge and Lonsdale used. For a Communist there is nothing inherently wrong in sacrificing the uncommitted to the course of history. If Mr. Voinov doesn't know this, he ought to be reading more solid fare than mine. To a Western man, there inherently is, but he does it all the same. Western inhibitions spring from the Christian and humanist ethic that the individual is worth more than the collective. In espionage as I have depicted it Western man sacrifices the individual to defend the individual's right against the collective. That is Western hypocrisy, and I condemned it because I felt it took us too far into the Communist camp, and too near to the Communist evaluation of the individual's place in society. Why should that bother Mr. Voinov?

IN *The Looking-Glass War*, to which he also refers, I tried to deal with a different aspect

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of the same Western predicament. The ideological deadlock which provided the background to *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* is replaced by the psychological deadlock of men whose emotional experiences are drawn from an old war. The piping has stopped but they still dance. In the opening chapters of the book we therefore follow two searches: one for the dead and one for the living. Sometimes the searchers are conscious of anachronism as drug addicts are conscious of drugs. This does not save them from addiction. I tried to touch new ground when I discussed the phenomenon of committed men who are committed to nothing but one another and the dreams they collectively evoke. At heart, I said, professional combatants of the Cold War have no ideological involvement. Half the time they are fighting the enemy, a good deal of the time they are fighting rival departments. The source of their energy lies not in the war of ideas but in their own desolate mentalities; they are the tragic ghosts, the unfallen dead of the last war. Because I chose a Western Intelligence Service as a vehicle for these ideas, do not think, I beg you, that I consider they do not apply elsewhere. I mention this because I have heard rumours that *The Looking-Glass War* may after all be published in the Soviet Union.

I now realise that both these books make an assumption which is anathema to a Communist, and directly contrary to the trend now established by the public relations team of the Soviet Secret Services: that the enemy is not outside us but within, that we fight not looking forward but looking back, not for the future but for the past. The problem of the Cold War is that, as Auden once wrote, we haunt a ruined century. Behind the little flags we wave, there are old faces weeping, and children mutilated by the fatuous conflicts of preachers. Mr. Voinov, I suspect, smelt in my writing the greatest heresy of all: that there is no victory and no virtue in the Cold War, only a condition of human illness and a political misery. And so he called me its apologist (he might as well have called Freud a lecher).

James Bond, on the other hand, breaks no such Communist principles. You know him well. He is the hyena who stalks the capitalist deserts, he is an identifiable antagonist, sustained by capital and kept in good heart by the charms of a materialist society; he is a chauvinist, an unblinking patriot who makes espionage exciting, the kind of person in fact who emerges from Lonsdale's diaries. Bond on his magic carpet takes us away from moral doubt, banishes perplexity with action, morality with duty. Above all, he has the one piece of equipment without which not even his formula would work: an entirely evil enemy. He is on your side, not mine. Now that you have honoured the qualities which created him, it is only a matter of time before you recruit him. Believe me, you have set the stage: the Russian Bond is on his way.

with greetings,

John Le Carré

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H. J. Eysenck

The Teaching Machine

and the Revolution in Education

IN A WELL-KNOWN ARTICLE the famous American psychologist B. F. Skinner has pointed out that

> scarcely any area of human activity has been more resistant to scientific analysis and technological change than education.... The methods whereby a teacher is supposed to impart knowledge to a room full of pupils have changed scarcely at all. Indeed, a number of critics are persuaded that there has been an actual decline in teaching effectiveness within the past 30 or 40 years.

There is little doubt that, broadly speaking, Skinner is correct. There have admittedly been minor changes; thus, some schools use green blackboards instead of the traditional black, and the more adventurous may occasionally use a half hour of television to help instruct their pupils. Even these small advances have found no foothold in the universities which still rely exclusively on lectures, seminars, occasional tutorials, and "private study" from text-books. The university student transplanted miraculously from the year 1600 to our modern universities would be quite at home, and a student who had taken part in the Socratic dialogues at Athens might even feel that the standard of teaching had declined considerably!

There are, of course, many things which are wrong in the system we operate, and which might be improved without any radical revolution. We select university teachers without any reference to their teaching abilities, and without giving them any training in what is after all a complex and highly skilled trade. Recent complaints from students at two of the older provincial universities in this country against the low standard of lecturing have been echoed in many other universities, and there can be little doubt that the average standard is deplorably low. Yet even if all our lecturers were adequate and had received a proper training in teaching methods, would this very much affect the applicability of the ancient tag about "facts passing from the notebook of the teacher to the notebook of the student without passing through the mind of either"?

Another problem which also could be solved —at least in theory, but which in practice bedevils all our efforts—is, of course, the lack of teachers. Can any system of education work efficiently when at school a teacher may have to attend to between 30 and 50 children at any one time or at a university when a professor may give a lecture to a group of 1,000 students who then troop out only to be replaced by another 1,000 who receive the same lecture again? The obvious remedy of training more teachers and professors runs into difficulties of finance (in order to attract more people into a profession you must raise their pay) and of distribution of relatively rare abilities (if more persons of high intelligence come into teaching they will be lost to other possibly equally important areas).

These, then, are our two besetting problems. What we are doing, we are not doing very well, and we are doing it under conditions which almost rule out any possibility of doing it well. Furthermore, we have no proper criteria of what "doing well" really means, and we have no scientific information as to how we can set about improving things. I have mentioned the possibility of "training" university teachers in the art of teaching, but one would have to be very optimistic to imagine that anyone really knows what should be taught. Certain negative points are, to be sure, obvious. Some people mumble and speak so inaudibly that nobody

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can hear them. Some people have physical defects which should bar them from teaching. I once suffered for a whole year from a professor of Latin who had a cleft palate which made it impossible to understand a word he said; the lectures were, of course, compulsory! Some teachers haven't done their homework and what they say doesn't make sense. All these are fairly obvious complaints which can be remedied in one way or another, but when it comes to more positive advice do we really know the answers even to the most elementary questions? The answer to this question at least is known. It is no.

Research into some of these problems might ameliorate the position but it is doubtful whether it can drastically transform it. What is needed, so many psychologists argue, is a complete break with tradition: a proper revolution in teaching methodology. Furthermore, it is argued that the essential breakthrough has already been achieved and that all that is standing in the way now is the usual array of traditional attitudes, sentimental wrong-headedness, and malinformed misunderstanding. What are the facts?

The revolution, as so often happens, began on a very mild note, causing scarcely a ripple of interest when Sydney L. Pressey in the mid-1920s designed the precursors of our modern automated teaching machines. These devices arose from Pressey's work with objective scoring techniques, which form such a large part of the American examination and intelligence-testing movement. Where thousands or even millions of people have to be tested, essays and other traditional type examinations are inefficient and time-consuming—apart from being extremely unreliable. It has often been shown that when the same set of papers is marked by independent examiners, their marks diverge very widely so that quite frequently students' passing or failing is determined far more by who the examiner is than by their actual knowledge and ability. Readers may remember the recent case where an enterprising school entered their children for two different but supposedly equivalent examinations held by separate authorities; there was almost no correspondence between passes and failure in these examinations, nor was there correspondence in the numbers passing and failing. Objective-type examinations, while they have their own difficulties and drawbacks, at least are perfectly reliable and, if properly constructed, undoubtedly more valid than are essay-type examinations for those areas where *knowledge* is being tested rather than ability to write essays.

The typical objective-type examination asks a question and then furnishes several answers, only one of which is right; the student has to indicate which is the correct answer. Here, for instance, is a typical item from such a test:

Teaching machines were pioneered by:
B. F. Skinner S. Freud
S. L. Pressey H. J. Eysenck
(*Underline the correct answer*)

In his work Pressey added one element which transformed these devices into teaching machines. What he did was to make use of a very important psychological principle which states that knowledge of results is an essential feature in learning. This has been demonstrated many times by experiments such as those of Thorndike who would show his subjects a line of a given length and would then ask them to draw this line hundreds of times from memory. He showed that their ability to do so did not improve, but that when they were told after each line drawn whether it was too long, too short, or just right, they learned very quickly. Now one of the essential features of all examinations, whether essay-type or objective-type, is the failure of any feed-back to reach the student. He may of course be told days, weeks, or even months later that he has passed or failed, but he has no way of linking this information with individual items answered correctly or incorrectly. Thus, in the ordinary way, tests do not aid in the process of teaching. Pressey changed this by using a device about the size of a portable typewriter which presented a question such as that given above to the student through a small window. The student had to press one of four keys corresponding to the four answer positions; if he pushed the correct key the roll of material behind the window moved on and produced the next question. If he pushed the wrong key the question remained until the right key had been pressed. In this way the student not only tested his knowledge but also acquired new knowledge. A few people became interested in the possibilities inherent in this type of device and compared its adequacy with regular class-room

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teaching; it was reported that results achieved with the machine were superior to those achieved in ordinary class-room teaching.

However, for reasons which can only be subject for speculation Pressey's work did not catch on, except for isolated studies here and there, and it was not until the late 1950s that the position began to change.

The change probably came about for two reasons. In the first place, Pressey did not have available a properly worked-out set of theories, carefully tested in the laboratory, which could be used to construct teaching programmes for his machines and which would lend his work respectability in the circles of theoretical and experimental psychologists. In the second place, he did not possess the single-minded, crusading type of personality that has so often been found necessary to push new developments on to an unsuspecting, ungrateful, and potentially distrustful and hostile world. The person to do all this was B. F. Skinner, who has spent many years in developing the laws of what is sometimes called "operant conditioning," and who had gathered around him a fanatical band of disciples to whom psychology was essentially Skinner and no one else. From his vantage point at Harvard, Skinner directed a very successful campaign to make teaching machines a household word in educational circles in America.

To understand what Skinner did needs some understanding of his personality and his general attitude to life. Skinner believes very strongly that psychology holds the key to any advancement in, and improvement of, the quality of human life. He further believes that all change is brought about by the process of conditioning (to which we will turn in a moment), and that what is needed is a working out of fundamental laws of conditioning and their application to practical human affairs. He has gone so far as to depict his kind of conditioned Utopia in a novel *Walden II* (1948), a title which will strike strange chords in the hearts of those familiar with Thoreau's original *Walden*! However amateurish his book may be from the literary point of view, it is well worth reading as a popular presentation of certain facts and theories in modern psychology, extended to deal with practical affairs and problems.

Putting it quite baldly, we may say that Skinner uses almost exclusively the law of reinforcement which states that actions which are immediately followed by rewards (reinforcements) are repeated and learned, whereas actions which are not followed by reinforcement are dropped from the repertoire of the organism in question. Without entering into any discussion about the adequacy of this law, possible exceptions to it, or doubts regarding its applicability to human beings, let me state first of all that Skinner has been brilliantly successful in teaching animals (mainly rats and pigeons) certain activities which nobody had previously thought it possible to teach these animals. A television programme made by him has shown some of these results, *e.g.*, pigeons playing ping-pong or dancing a quadrille. These results are

Testing

Washington

Each year *millions of young Americans submit their destinies to one or more of 25 widely used standardised tests designed to separate sheep from goats. Children who do badly usually wind up in the oafs class and need influential fathers to get them into the better colleges. In* Educational Testing for the Millions, *Gene R. Hawes describes objectively the 25 most common tests now in circulation.*

It is highly unsettling. As Mr. Hawes describes test after test with examples from each, it becomes apparent that in the tests' verbal portions, at least, the testers almost invariably come down against the child with the interesting mind and reward the commonplace child with powerful instincts for the cliché.

One test, for example, asks the child to choose one of five words that will "make the best, the truest and the most sensible sentence" of the following: "There's no man so . . . but something good may be found in him." The child has his choice of "likeable," "upright," "wicked," and "handsome."

The ordinary mind will pounce instinctively on "wicked" and the testers will mark him correct. But what of the youngster who looks at the world from an active brain and chooses "upright"? The testers fail him; his mind does not travel in the approved rut. And yet "upright" is preferable on every score. It transforms the cliché into an epigram worthy of Oscar Wilde, and, hence, clearly makes "the best" sentence, as demanded by the test.

A test for high-school asks the student to choose one of the five words "that means the same" as "quiet." The choices: "blue," "still," "tense," "watery," "exact." The poetic answer, "blue," fails again; the testers award the scholarship for the humdrum "still."

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achieved by a process called "shaping." The experimenter first decides on the sequence of movements he wants the animal to learn and then offers a few grains of corn to the pigeon whenever it makes a movement even remotely in line with the first movement of the sequence. Gradually the movement will become more frequent and more precise until it is reproduced perfectly and the next step in the sequence is then "shaped." In the hands of an expert the whole thing can be done quickly and expeditiously, and the chain can be as long as desired.

Making use of the knowledge gained in some thirty years of work with animals, Skinner took up the challenge of teaching machines, *i.e.*, the application of "shaping" to human learning. He first stated the purpose of a teaching machine:

> To teach rapidly, thoroughly, and expeditiously a large part of what we now teach slowly, incompletely, and with wasted effort on the part of both student and teachers.

In order to achieve this aim he departs in several important ways from the original Pressey scheme.

1. He pays little attention to knowledge of results, believing that this is only important by virtue of the reinforcement that a correct solution produces in the student. In other words, he assumes that the signal which tells the student that his answer is right is in some way equivalent to the grains of corn which served to motivate the pigeon. This is an assumption which is difficult to prove; but it forms the basis of Skinner's approach. *2.* This emphasis on "stamping in" knowledge through reinforcement makes it desirable that such reinforcement should be given very frequently and, accordingly, Skinner stresses the construction of programmes of learning which proceed by small steps and are accompanied by questions such that the average student will nearly always succeed in answering the question. Our little example of who pioneered teaching machines will show how this is done; by the time the reader reached this item he had already been given enough information to answer it correctly.

In the third place, and leading to the same conclusion, Skinner believes that wrong answers are to be avoided at all costs. As he says:

> Our ability to remember wrong facts—because we recall having read them somewhere—is notorious. Every wrong answer on a multiple-choice test increases the probability that the student will some day dredge out of his imperfect memory the wrong answer instead of the right one.

This contradicts his stress on reinforcement—why should the student so tenaciously remember something which has not been reinforced? However, logical consistency has never worried Skinner very much and the programmes he has constructed certainly emphasise small steps and almost uniformly successful completion of each item. Skinner is opposed to multiple-choice questions and prefers that:

> The student should compose his response rather than select it from a set of alternatives. One reason for this is that we want him to recall rather than merely recognise—to make a response as well as see that it is right.

This is his fourth point of difference from Pressey.

Skinner and his followers have accordingly constructed and experimented with machines which are different from those previously employed. A question is exposed, and the student writes his answer in a proper space. He then pulls a lever which exposes the correct answer and also hides his written response under a sheet of celluloid so that he cannot go back and alter it. After comparing the two and seeing that he is right he then goes on to the next question, writes in his answer, etc. Skinner has also constructed somewhat more elaborate two-stage machines, in which the student writes his response and then uncovers not the correct response but additional information which enables him to correct his reply if necessary before uncovering the correct answer.

Skinner has actually used these machines in teaching his psychology course at Harvard, and he maintains that students "like the machine" and report that they "learned more in less time and with less effort than in conventional ways." There is good evidence from published studies that these findings are fairly general; both students and children become fascinated with the machines, like using them, find work with them easier than attending lectures or reading books, and learn more in comparable periods of time than they would otherwise do.

Many other workers have taken up this topic in recent years, and not all of them have followed Skinner in his theoretical

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analysis or in his practical methods of programming. There is, for instance, the so-called "branching" method in which the steps from one question to another are rather larger, so that more errors occur. Whenever the question is wrongly answered, however, the programme branches so that the person giving the wrong answer is taken back over a series of steps that should finally enable him to give the right answer. Only then will he join the main programme again and go on to the next question. This type of programme has the advantage that the very bright can go ahead in large steps, as befits their ability, and are not bored by repetitive questions, and too small steps. The not so bright can recapitulate whenever they go wrong and have a programme prepared for them which is particularly suitable for their level of understanding. Which of these types of programme is preferable will usually depend on the degree of variability in intelligence, previous knowledge, etc., existing in the group of students who are to make use of the programme. If they are very homogeneous, branching programmes may not be needed; if they are very heterogeneous, branching programmes will almost be a necessity. It will be noted that, according to Skinner, branching programmes should not work very well because wrong answers are frequently given; the evidence does not suggest that this interferes very much with learning.

Skinner concludes that "machines such as those we used at Harvard could be programmed to teach, in whole or in part, all the subjects taught in elementary and high school and many taught in college." I think the evidence supports Skinner's claim, and it also suggests that he is right in thinking that his machines will carry out the task more efficiently and in shorter time than would be true of human teachers.

Let me add at once that the value of any actual comparisons that have been made is strictly limited. There are several reasons for this. In the first place, there are obviously good and bad teachers, and there are good and bad programmes. It is very difficult in any particular study to know whether the programme was as good of its kind as the teacher was compared to other teachers. Indeed, one might almost say that the question at the moment cannot be answered. All that we can say is that the average teacher under present conditions will usually not do as well as a machine using a programme of average excellence. This may not necessarily be due to any inherent superiority in the programme; it might be due to the interest and the resultant drive produced by introducing some new toy into the school and allowing the children to play with it. In other words we may be dealing here with a new version of the famous "Hawthorne" effect. It will be remembered that industrial psychologists at this plant found that gradual improvement in working conditions produced considerable increase in output which was at first attributed to the change in conditions. It was then found, however, that the improvement went on although conditions had now been changed for the worse. It is generally believed that improvement was due to a change in attitude on the part of the workers, produced largely by the personal interest shown in them by the investigators! Something of this kind might very well be active in many of the experiments that have been reported, although in other cases the machines have been used for a long enough period of time to make this explanation unacceptable.

WHY, THEN, does a machine work better than the teacher? The answer, paradoxically enough, may be that it proceeds in a less machine-like fashion. A teacher faced with a class of fifty pupils or a professor faced with a class which may number several hundred has little or no chance of receiving any feed-back from individual members of the class. They may understand what he says or they may not; he will not know until the final examinations are held. Very occasionally a given child or student may be asked a question by the teacher and the reply will provide some degree of feed-back, and, if correct, an increment in reinforcement; but this occurs so rarely for any given child or student that it may for all practical purposes be disregarded.

In the case of the teaching machine, however, there is direct "personal" contact. The student is constantly active, receiving information this minute, answering questions the next minute, checking on the accuracy of his answer, going back over a branch line when his answer has betrayed a lack of understanding, and generally not proceeding until he has thoroughly digested all the information required. With some modern programmes it is possible to have 10,000 individuals go through the machine in

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such a way that not two of them answer the same series of questions! In other words, there is here a degree of individual adaptation of teaching to student needs which could only be achieved if one human teacher was available for each student. Even then it is doubtful whether any human being could keep up this constant interplay for any length of time, or could proceed in a series of scientifically planned steps, tested carefully in many thousands of programme hours.

This, indeed, is another outstanding feature of the man/machine interaction. A record of right and wrong answers is left behind when the teaching is finished and this can be statistically analysed to disclose those stages where questions are too difficult, where spacing is incorrect or where meaning is obscure. Programmes can then be improved and re-written until they are tailored to the needs of a particular group of students in a way that probably no human teacher could achieve.

SKINNER CLAIMS that teaching machines provide a means of solving many of our educational problems in a completely revolutionary way, and I have little doubt that in essence he is right. We may disagree with certain details of his own programmes or even with major parts of his theory. This is completely unimportant because, like all scientific advances, these matters are self-correcting. Research is proceeding on a large scale at the moment in the United States (and, to some extent, also in this country), and the answers to most factual problems will undoubtedly be forthcoming in the next ten years or so. What arguments are there to put against these new developments?

MANY OPPONENTS say that not all subjects can be taught by machines, and this objection is certainly true at the moment but largely irrelevant. What can and cannot be taught adequately by machines is a matter for research and informed decisions, and already experiments are under way to teach such things as "sense of rhythm," inductive reasoning, and so on. Whether these and other topics can or cannot be taught will soon be known; but in any case the fact that some subjects cannot be taught does not invalidate the claim that others *can*, or the deduction that they *should*.

Another complaint is that these new methods will displace the teacher, and that this in some unspecified way would be a disaster. This again is not true. It is not suggested that teachers, professors, and others engaged in education should completely hand over to the machine; it is merely suggested that they should use the machine to relieve them of certain standardised routine types of duty which are boring in themselves and can be performed better by the machine. In most subjects—perhaps not all—there is a large amount of factual information that has to be mastered before any interesting or stimulating contact between student and teacher is possible. I am moderately sure in my own mind that my students can get something more out of a seminar in which we discuss the approaches of different learning theorists, or the methods of personality measurement used by different schools, than they could from any machine programme. I am much more certain, however, that this interplay is only possible *after* they have acquired a great deal of factual information in all these fields which they can get very much better from a good programme than from me. This is not a statement prompted by modesty; it is simply a statement of fact, based on a large volume of research.

This links up with another criticism which is often voiced, namely, that a good teacher can provide enthusiasm and an enlargement of the student's outlook which goes well beyond any facts that might be taught. I would be the last person to deny this. But, again, I think an inspiring teacher might if anything be helped if the drudgery of imparting elementary fact were handed over to a machine, leaving him free for his own much more important contribution.

Cost is a much more rational criticism; here again I don't think it is a very convincing one. Admittedly some of the more complex machines are very expensive at the moment, but this is usually true only because they are not mass-produced. Mass-production, and simplification made possible by the universal use of such machines in schools and universities, would bring down the price abruptly to such a level that cost would not be a problem. Furthermore, this cost would have to be set against the saving in salaries which might be achieved, and also against the improvement in knowledge and qualifications following upon the introduction of such machines. It is quite impossible at the present time to lay out a balance-sheet of this kind, and I doubt very much if cost should prove a decisive factor either way. When pro-

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jects such as *"University of the Air"* are under consideration, it is clear that money is not a decisive factor; a university of this type, using television channels, would be more expensive in all likelihood than even an ambitious programme of endowing our basic schools with teaching machines.

WHILE I do not think that these criticisms and objections have very much value, there are a few comments which I think may be worth making. The first point is that the advocates of teaching machines have neglected a very important variable. All the research has dealt with averages, but there has been no effort to find out the importance or relevance of individual differences. It is reasonably well known that introverts prefer private study and reading, while extraverts prefer lectures and seminars, and it is possible that each type of person gets more out of the activity preferred. It does not seem likely that all types of personalities would benefit equally from machine teaching or from identical types of programmes, and research along these lines would seem to be exceptionally important. Unfortunately, nothing very much can be said about this as no one appears to have done any research into this problem. Even on Skinner's own principles one would have expected some interest in these matters. It has been shown, for instance, that introverts benefit from praise, extraverts from blame. Surely this fact must be relevant to the use, say, of "branching" programmes?

Many other similar points could be made in criticism of the existing programmes of research; but when it is remembered that serious work in this field is only about ten years old, I think that to ask for perfection is unreasonable. Instead of pursuing this line I would like to conclude by stating what to my mind is the most important outcome of all this work. It is possible to argue, I believe, that the actual physical existence of teaching machines is the *least* important result of the work of Pressey and Skinner. What they have demonstrated is the importance of a tough-minded experimental approach to the problems of teaching and learning, and the value of using whatever principles, or laws, learning theory has to offer us in this respect. The man-in-the-street and the educationalist have not always realised the possible contribution which the scientific approach can make to areas such as education which have traditionally been represented by non-scientists. The work here described has forced them to look for the first time at some examples at least of the scientific approach. Imperfect as these undoubtedly are, they are sufficiently challenging to arouse interest, and to call for further research.

This research may lead in unexpected directions. What we learn about ways of programming machines may help us to "programme" teachers, if this use of the term be permitted. In other words, what we learn about the most efficient ways of teaching has general applicability and may furnish us with the knowledge needed to teach teachers to teach.

In many ways the advances I have described in this article are parallel in the educational field to the advances made by behaviour therapy in the psychiatric field. In each case the application of modern experimental techniques and methods has led to a break-through which opens up exciting possibilities for the future. If these possibilities are to be realised it is important that the man-in-the-street should fully understand what is happening and should be kept informed of progress. This is but an interim report. I have no doubt that in a few years' time our understanding will be much more complete and a much more definitive report will then be able to be written.

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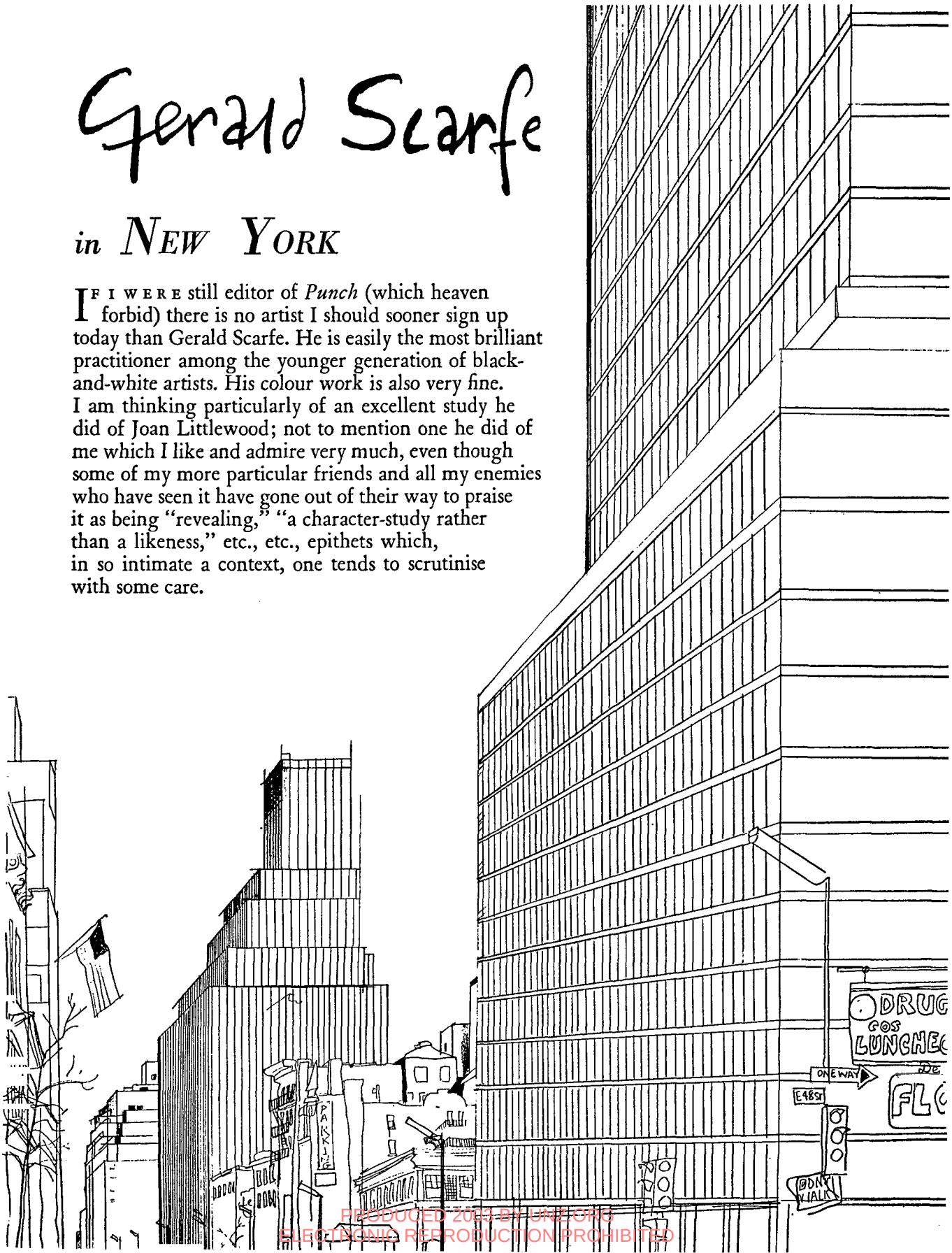
Gerald Scarfe

in NEW YORK

IF I WERE still editor of *Punch* (which heaven forbid) there is no artist I should sooner sign up today than Gerald Scarfe. He is easily the most brilliant practitioner among the younger generation of black-and-white artists. His colour work is also very fine. I am thinking particularly of an excellent study he did of Joan Littlewood; not to mention one he did of me which I like and admire very much, even though some of my more particular friends and all my enemies who have seen it have gone out of their way to praise it as being "revealing," "a character-study rather than a likeness," etc., etc., epithets which, in so intimate a context, one tends to scrutinise with some care.



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The first Lord Leverhulme, it will be recalled, having commissioned a portrait by Augustus John, when he collected it carefully cut out the face (no great loss, as a matter of fact) and put the mutilated canvas away in his safe. Again, there was Churchill's reaction to Graham Sutherland's superb portrait. Viewers who were fortunate enough to be tuned in for the occasion of the portrait's presentation will remember the old fellow's look-what-the-cat's-brought-in expression when he glanced at it. What both these eminent citizens disliked about their portraits was that they conveyed a true and real impression rather than the legendary one to which public personages, particularly when they are old, cling so tenaciously. Scarfe likewise is no trafficker in legends. He draws what he sees *through,* not with the eye (following Blake's admonition that *"they ever must believe a lie/Who see with, not through the eye."*). He is *not* a camera.

I see Scarfe as the true heir to Ronald Searle, who I know has been one of the great influences on his work. Like Searle, he is a superb draughtsman, with a strong, subtle, and original line, and possessed by that insensate loathing for the more bestial characteristics of contemporary man out of which great cartoonists are made. This fine moral fervour of his which leads him, for instance, to portray Harold Wilson as something between a porker and a lay preacher, has inevitably been labelled "sick." The cry of the Horrid Sisters in *Macbeth* that fair is foul and foul is fair is, *par excellence,* today's slogan; Scarfe's "sickness" is the measure of his moral health.

The truth is, of course, that the art of caricature, by its very nature, has to concentrate upon the grossness and absurdities of its subjects, and that the more clearly a caricaturist can sense perfection the more dramatically and poignantly is he aware of his own and his fellows' intrinsic imperfection. I happened to meet Low at some kind of social gathering a little while before he died. He was looking decidedly poorly in health, but, to my great pleasure, more benign and serene in mood than I had ever seen him before. He complained wryly to me that he was no good as a cartoonist any more (an exaggeration, actually, though his work *had* fallen off of late) because he no longer hated anyone or resented anything. I reminded him of the epitaph Swift wrote for himself—that he had gone where his furious indignation could no longer lacerate his heart. How fortunate, I said, not to have to wait like the poor Dean to get to Heaven to attain this blissful state! Yes, he said, but Swift beatified didn't have to turn in cartoons to a high-minded newspaper editor without a sense of humour. True enough. The dear man, in any case, was soon afterwards to be relieved of the necessity himself.

SCARFE'S furious indignation may be assumed to be in full laceration. He is a very youthful looking twenty-nine, and about as unlike the popular idea of the demonic begetter of his drawings as can possibly be imagined. Very gentle and genial and unassuming, with only those very bright eyes to tell one that behind the kindly, diffident exterior there is a gimlet mind probing into the shapes and countenances confronting him. Not a particularly robust person in physique, but, like all visual artists, conveying a sense of terrific inward vitality. I have always noticed with visual artists that they burn inwardly, like haystacks. One is conscious of this terrific combustion going on under the surface, only showing in their eyes, and in their total absorption in the shapes and shadows and structures of men and animals and plants and so-called inanimate objects around them.

Thus my dear friend Illingworth—another superb black-and-white artist of an older generation, as Scarfe is the first to acknowledge—walks along by your side without saying a word, wholly absorbed in trees (if wintertime, in their sublime tracery; in summertime, in their glorious foliage), stones, telegraph poles, whatever meets his gaze. Swimming in the Mediterranean, he puts on a snorkel and disappears, unable to tear himself away from looking at the colours, the miraculous creatures and flora, in the ocean bed. Confronted with such spectacles, what is there to say? He and the earth are lovers. *"All day, the same our postures were,/And we said nothing, all the day."* His lover's dread is that factory-farmers, pesticide-horticulturists, and other enemies of life will gradually denude the earth of its animal and vegetable treasures; a more wretched outcome even than a sudden nuclear explosion leaving only cinders behind.

Scarfe is fortunate indeed in never having studied anything or received any instruction. Thus the process of education—subtlest and most demoralising of all forms of brain-washing—passed him by. Soon it will be the case that no

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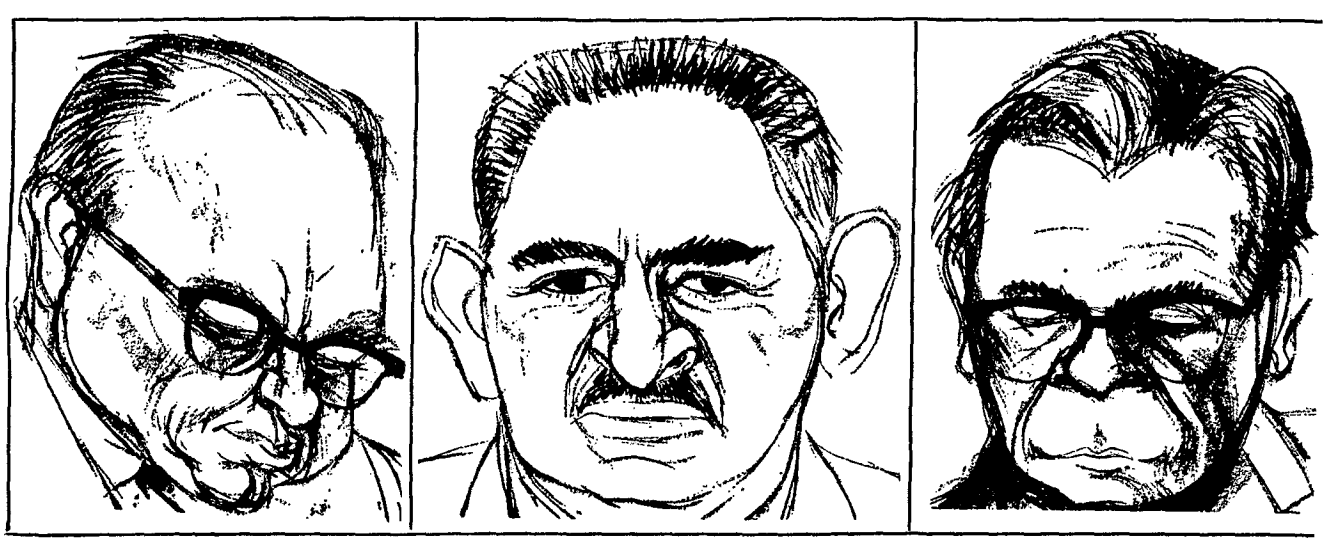
NORMAN PODHORETZ

ALFRED KAZIN

DANIEL BELL

HAROLD ROSENBERG

RICHARD HOFSTADTER



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one who is educated has a chance in life. While others were being subjected to this dread process, Scarfe was drawing; an art to which he was addicted from his earliest years. He had to spend a lot of time in bed owing to an asthmatic condition, but this also facilitated the development of his originality and talent. His home circumstances were, roughly speaking, middle-class. He is unmarried, but by no means averse to female companionship. Like many another, for a while he supported himself by teaching (that first infirmity of noble minds)—at the London School of Printing; but at a ridiculously early age his work began to be accepted by editors (the *Evening Standard, Punch,* and, of course, *Private Eye*), and now, happily, he is well established with every prospect for a dazzling career as a highly original, greatly gifted, deeply serious artist and commentator on the mid-20th century, with all its fatuities, horrors, unique blessings and particular imbecilities.

The drawings which follow were done by Scarfe in New York rather more than a year

NORMAN MAILER

NORMAN MAILER. *Novelist. 43. Born in Long Branch, New Jersey. Author of "The Naked and the Dead," "The Deer Park," and "An American Dream."*

NORMAN PODHORETZ. *Journalist. 36. Born in Brooklyn, New York. Editor of "Commentary" Magazine, author of "Doings and Undoings."*

ALFRED KAZIN. *Literary critic. 50. Born in Brooklyn. Author of "On Native Grounds," "A Walker in the City," and "Starting Out in the Thirties."*

DANIEL BELL. *Sociologist. 47. Born in Manhattan. Professor at Columbia University, author of "The End of Ideology."*

HAROLD ROSENBERG. *Art Critic. 60. Born in Brooklyn, New York. Writes for "The New Yorker" and "Partisan Review." Author of "The Tradition of the New."*

RICHARD HOFSTADTER. *Historian. 50. Born in Buffalo, New York. Professor at Columbia University. Author of "Anti-Intellectualism in American Life."*

ELIA KAZAN. *Film and theatre director. 57. Born in Constantinople (Turkey). Founder of the Lincoln Centre Theatre and the Actors Studio. Associated on stage and screen with Tennessee Williams, Arthur Miller, Marlon Brando.*

LARRY RIVERS. *Painter. 43. Born in New York City. "Father" of Pop Art.*

BARNETT NEWMAN. *Painter. 61. Born in New York City. Exponent of the "Abstract Sublime."*

ROBERT MOTHERWELL. *Painter. 51. Born in Aberdeen, Washington. Abstract Expressionist.*

ADOLPH GOTTLIEB. *Painter. 63. Born in New York City. Abstract Expressionist.*

ALLEN GINSBURG. *Poet. 40. Born in Newark, New Jersey. Founder of the "Beatnik" school. Author of "Howl," "Reality Sandwiches," "Journal of the Death Vine."*

AARON COPLAND. *Composer. 66. Born in Brooklyn. Leader of the contemporary school in American music: "Appalachian Spring," "Rodeo," "Billy the Kid."*

ROBERT LOWELL. *Poet. 49. Born in Boston, Massachusetts. Author of "Lord Weary's Castle," "Life Studies," "Imitations."*

ROBERT OPPENHEIMER. *Physicist. 62. Born in New York City. Wartime director of the Los Alamos bomb project, peacetime director of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton.*

ARTHUR MILLER. *Playwright. 51. Born New York City. Author of "Death of a Salesman," "The Crucible," "After the Fall."*

IGOR STRAVINSKY. *Composer. 84. Born St. Petersburg (Russia). Leader of the modernist school in twentieth-century music: "Fire-bird," "Rites of Spring," "Oedipus Rex," "The Rake's Progress."*

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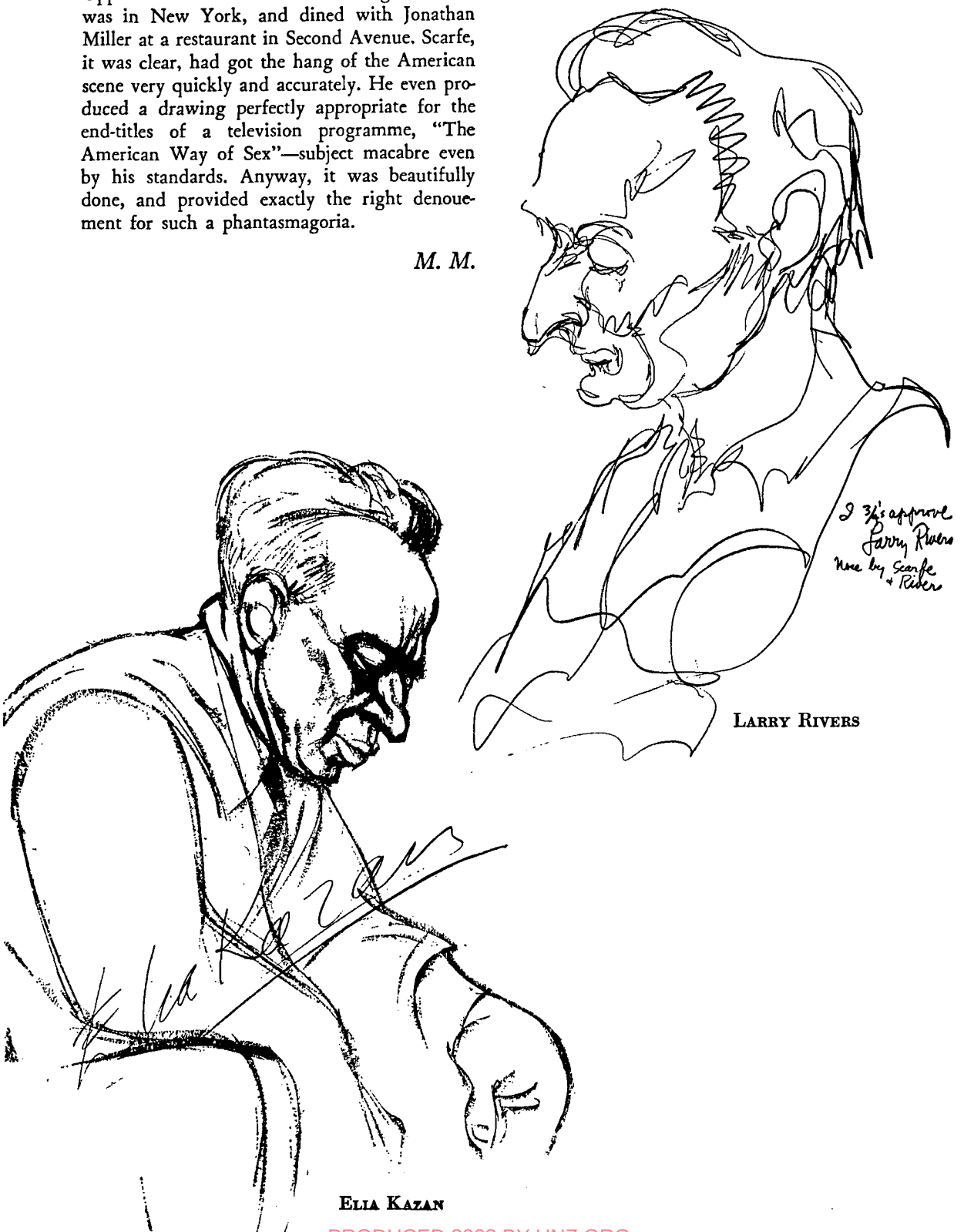
ago, and are excellent, though in their quietude not wholly characteristic, examples of his work. I like especially the Arthur Miller, the Robert Lowell, the Igor Stravinsky, and the Robert Oppenheimer. We met one evening when he was in New York, and dined with Jonathan Miller at a restaurant in Second Avenue. Scarfe, it was clear, had got the hang of the American scene very quickly and accurately. He even produced a drawing perfectly appropriate for the end-titles of a television programme, "The American Way of Sex"—subject macabre even by his standards. Anyway, it was beautifully done, and provided exactly the right denouement for such a phantasmagoria.

M. M.



LARRY RIVERS

ELIA KAZAN

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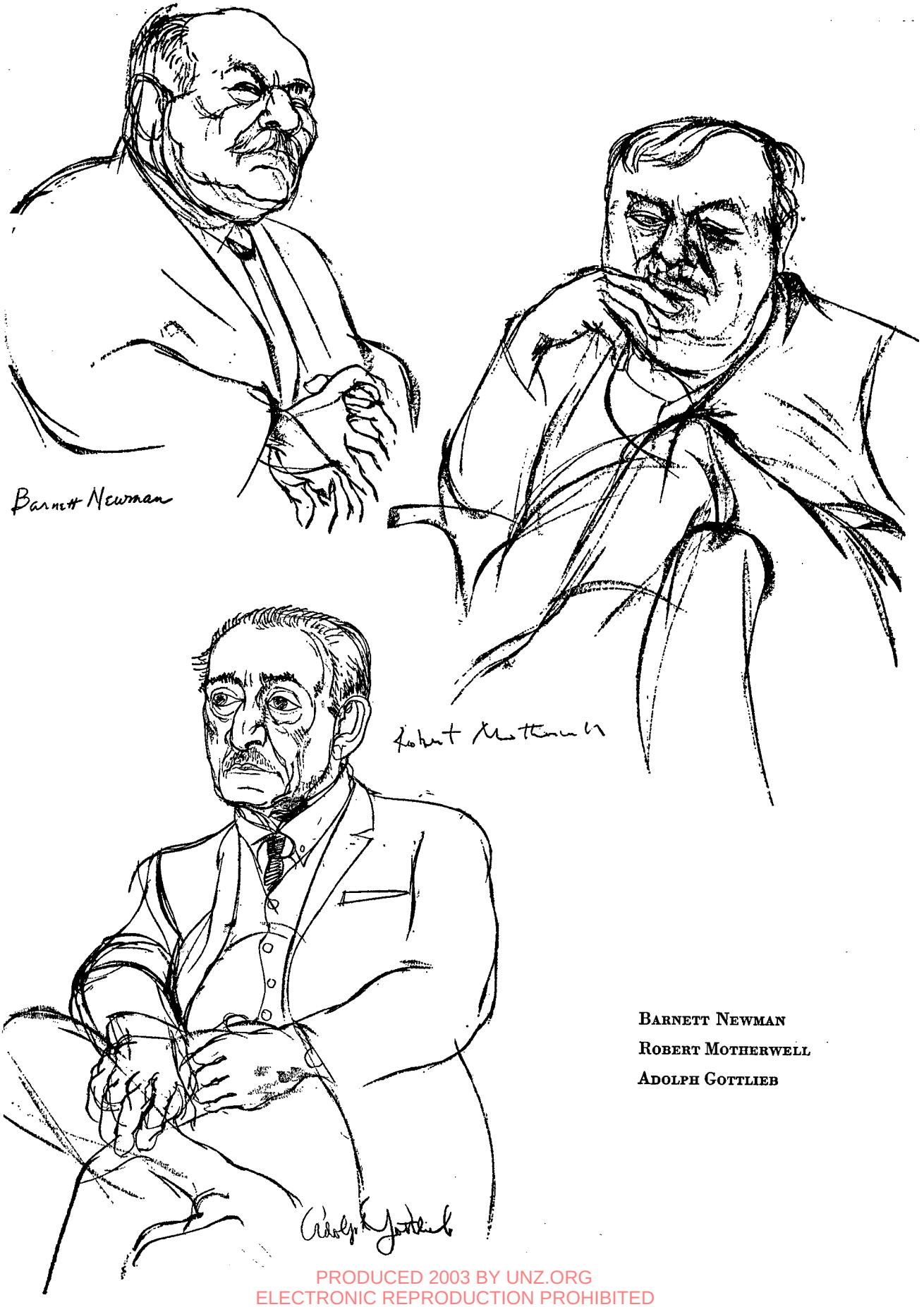

BARNETT NEWMAN
ROBERT MOTHERWELL
ADOLPH GOTTLIEB

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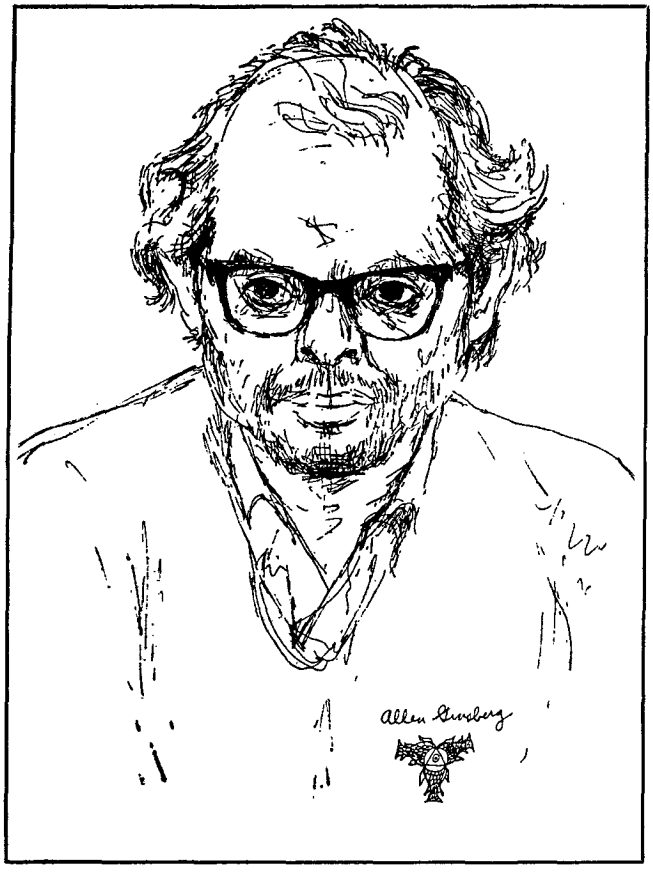
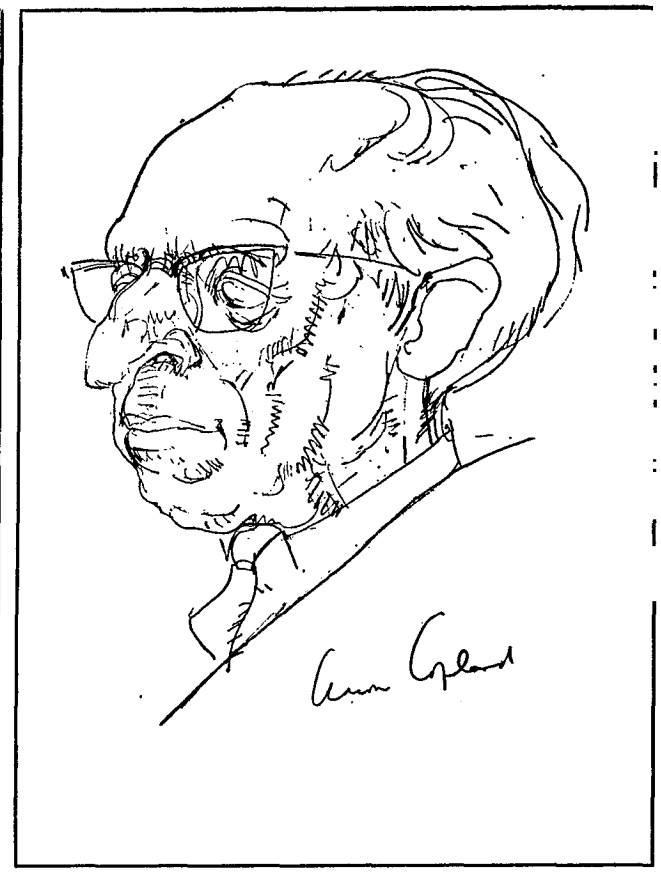
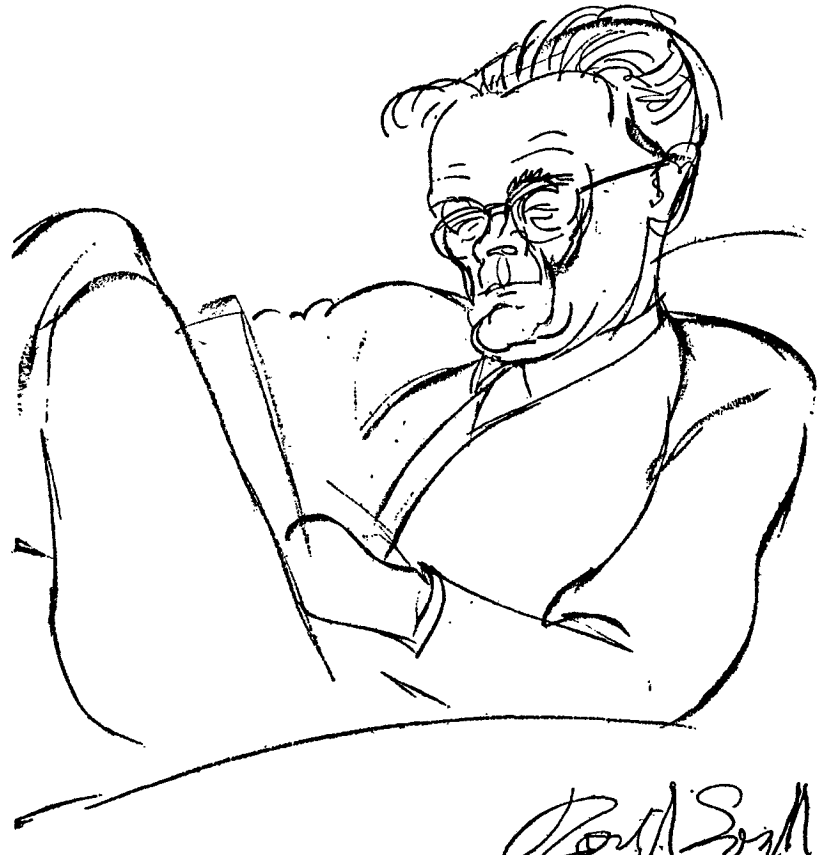




ALLEN GINSBERG

AARON COPLAND

ROBERT LOWELL



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ROBERT OPPENHEIMER

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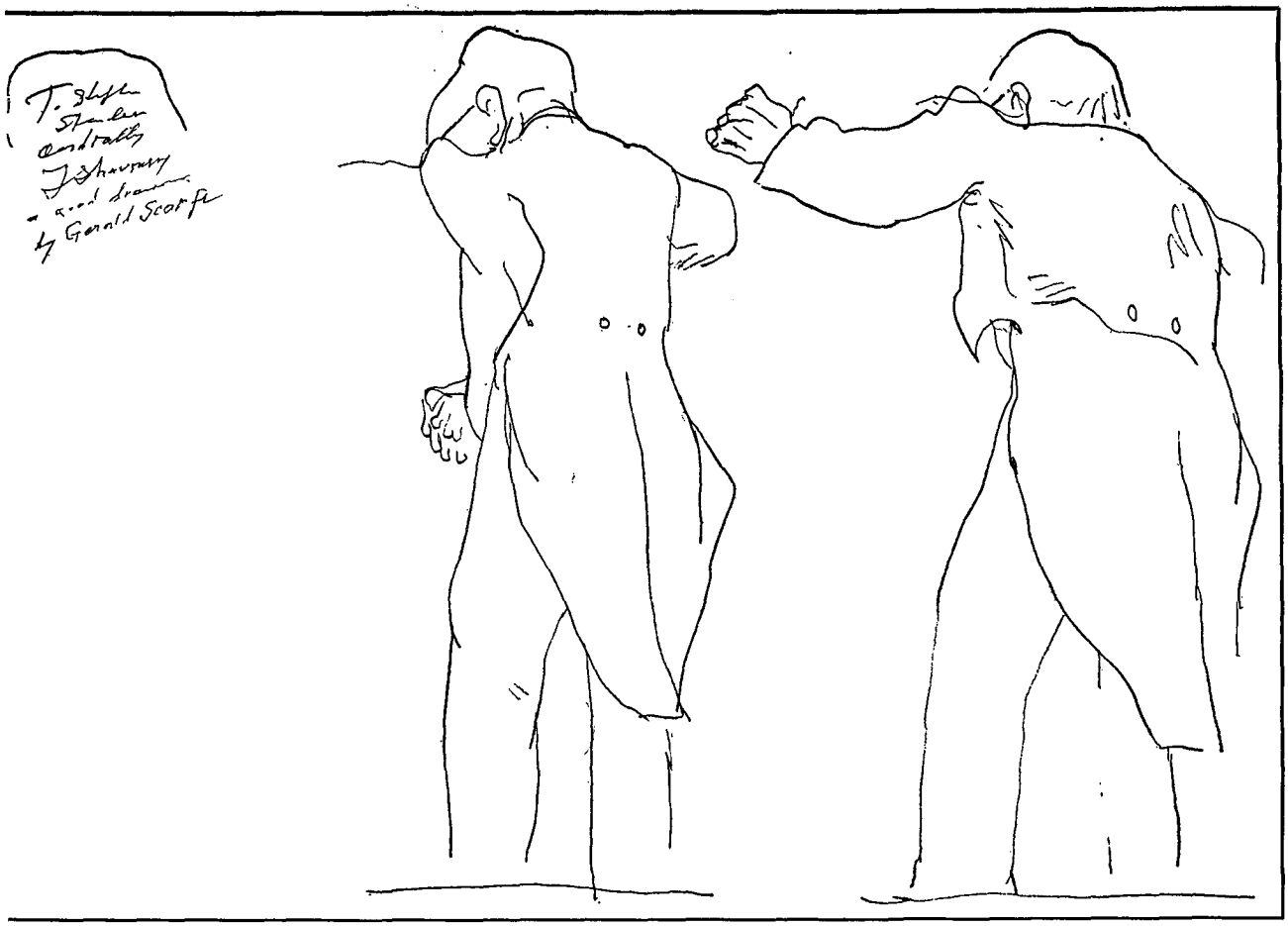
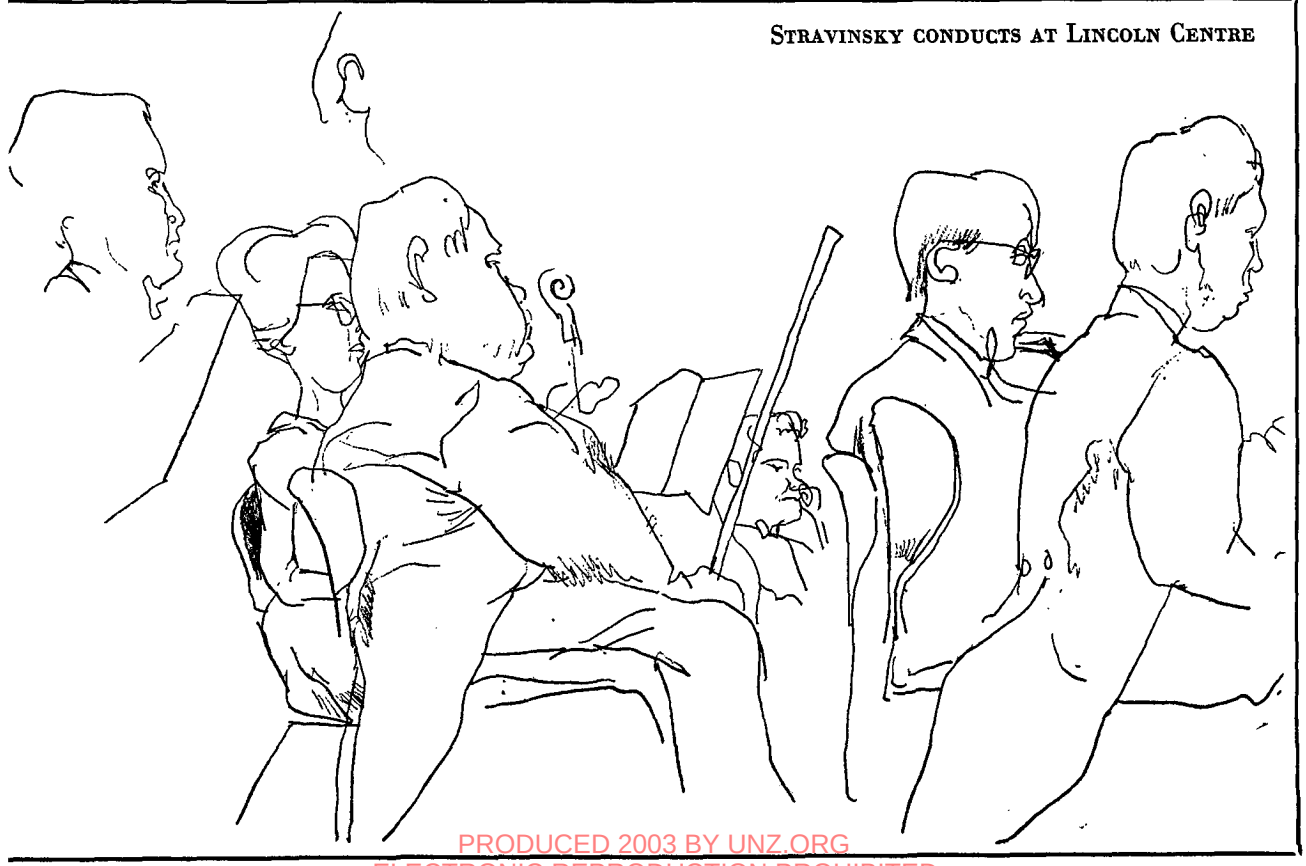


STRAVINSKY CONDUCTS AT LINCOLN CENTRE



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IGOR STRAVINSKY

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Eugène Ionesco

Journal (II)

MY PLAY, *Le Roi se meurt,* was translated by I. Vinea, one of Rumania's greatest poets. I knew him once, a very long time ago. I remember his aristocratic presence. He was a good-looking, quiet, sensitive, intelligent man, and not a Fascist like most Rumanian "intellectuals." After the extreme Left came to power, he ceased to be Left-wing, which was a healthy, honest reaction. He refused to be brainwashed into stupidity or to sell his allegiance. He was a free man, who wanted freedom for others too: he derived no benefit from any form of tyranny and accepted suffering at the hands of all, although all of them asked him to be their accomplice. He lived, neither master nor servant, in aristocratic isolation. The political authorities at first kept him in the background and then, when circumstances changed, reviewed his case, as the saying goes. They accepted the fact that he was a great poet and published his works: he had shown such nobility, he had been so honest and uncompromising, that the people who had been impressed but had not had the courage to say so, now openly expressed their feelings, as did those others who decided, one fine day, that the strategic moment had come to display admiration for a man who, morally, had never weakened. But his physical strength was ebbing away, and he has just died at the age of seventy.

I was happy to learn that it was he who was translating my play and proud that he should have chosen to do so: I was distressed to learn at the same time that he was very ill, indeed at death's door, and then that he had died. His was a powerful personality and I was sensitive to its radiance, but I had never really been close to him. In any case, you never get to know anyone through conversation, nor even through holding him by the hand or walking close by his side. Communion can only be achieved through the written word, *i.e.*, through a confession, in other words by getting inside the other person's world and sounding his innermost depths. Here, at least, we have a justification for literature. There is nothing banal about this because, although the remark is often made, the reality is seldom achieved. Solitary communion with the work, solitary communion with the other, who is not even aware that the experiment, the approach, has been undertaken, who does not know that he is truly and profoundly known. One person's world becomes the world of another. Deep, unobtrusive, total intimacy.

I. Vinea died just after finishing the translation. I wonder what it meant to him, whether it helped him in any way. I had written the play as a study in the art of dying. It was meant to serve as a lesson, a sort of spiritual exercise, a gradual progression, each stage of which I tried to facilitate, towards the inevitable end. When my play was performed in Paris and abroad, a number of critics declared that it contained only commonplace thoughts, unoriginal, predictable reflections: this may have been because those particular theatre-goers could not forget they were in a theatre, and refused to enter into an experience which, in one sense, can never be anything but commonplace, of course, since it is in store for us all, but which is fundamental for anyone who tries to live it to the full. My play may, or may not, have helped Vinea to die. It did not help me; during the process of writing, it was as if I were rejecting the text as I went along. It was only another play, and I saw it as if I were just a member of the audience, rather more sensitised to it than others were, but even so as if it were divorced from myself. If I could be sure that it had helped him in some way, and how it had helped him . . . if only I could be sure. To know

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it had helped someone to calm his anxiety and accept his fate would be, for me, a source of joy and relief, as well as a justification. To know that my play had served as a lesson for others might, perhaps, encourage me to believe that I myself might benefit from my own lesson.

I AM TORN between regret and remorse. I must make up my mind and choose between the two, because it is impossible to tolerate both at once. Remorse because I feel guilty of having harmed others. Regret because I feel guilty of having harmed myself. I swing from regret to remorse, and then from remorse back to regret. This is what is meant by being walled in, imprisoned. In the morning I feel regret, but at nightfall remorse. Regret has the semblance of egotism. Have I the right to be egotistical? Can I choose between those things which harm me least, can I choose between myself and the other man, as between two objects, when in fact we are beings, existences? Regret is difficult to bear, but it is clear, it remains concrete. Remorse has at first the semblance of others, then it loses that semblance which is swallowed up in darkness, leaving remorse as a faceless anguish.

I DEMAND THE RIGHT to work out my own relationship with myself, to come face to face with myself. From my confrontation with myself there may perhaps emerge a different being. "Don't change. Don't allow all the various kinds of anxiety to rise to the surface, you would never be able to stand it." But since, in any case, I cannot stand myself, the time for self-awareness has come. It is time to conquer. "But what is the use of struggling?" asks the other voice, "What's the use?" But I stagger along, I gasp for breath, I am slowly dying through the sheer inability to die, through not knowing how to die. If I could manage to think of myself as being already dead, my anxiety would be killed. Think of myself as being dead? I shall never manage to do so until I am killed by death. I know, I know it is better to kill oneself than to let oneself be killed. Here I am faced with an unscalable mountain. And since I think that the whole thing is impossible, it is useless for me to go on thinking about it; such thoughts are mere literature.

WHILE I AM concentrating on my problems, *i.e.*, while I am grappling with myself, a great many men are living in poverty, killing each other, waging war against each other; 99 per cent of those waging war do not want to fight; like me, they are prisoners, but not of themselves, of their leaders: only the leaders are free to want war or not to want it, to opt for or against it and to give the signal for the slaughter. The whole country, it is said, takes up arms against the oppressor and dies in the cause of independence, the whole nation is determined to free itself from the oppressor, since it is supposed to hate what is called American imperialism or capitalist exploitation, or other forms of exploitation and tyrannical rule. This is crude and cruel irony, or mere *images d'Epinal*: the Algerians were so determined to break free from the French settlers that, as soon as the Algerian War came to an end, whole boatloads of them were shipped to France to find work and eke out a livelihood. In the district of Paris where I lived at the time of the war, I once saw a magnificent American car stopping every twenty or thirty yards at each Arab shop to collect voluntary contributions to the cause of Algerian freedom; in it were four well-dressed Arabs and a girl, a kind of Passionaria. To judge by the shopkeepers' faces, there was nothing voluntary about their contributions. There was nothing voluntary either about the Arab who expired on my door-step; he could hardly have been bumped off because he had volunteered to fight.

In certain East European countries, hatred of American capitalist exploitation was so great that twenty years after the revolution which gave them their freedom, these countries cheerfully re-established American companies, with the help of American capital. Very wretched, indeed, were those Danubian peasants who would walk barefoot along the roads, after slinging their boots over their shoulders because their feet got overheated in them, and who had nothing to eat except bread, bacon, eggs, cream-cheese, onions, potatoes, and now and again a small chicken, which had just had its neck wrung in the farmyard where dozens of others were awaiting the same fate. These unfortunate peasants were very worried because, attendance at primary school having been made obligatory, they could no longer keep their children at home to work, with the result that only the farmer's wife was left to milk the cow.

However, this is not the point I want to make, and I seem to be digressing into politics. What I meant to say is this: people in prison obviously want to be set free, the hungry man wants a

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modicum of food, the soldier fighting in a war is afraid of war, he is afraid and so surmounts the dangers, he is afraid of dying here and now and, once the fighting is over, he is glad to have escaped death, glad that he will have a little time, almost an eternity, in which to live free from fear. The fear of danger drives out anxiety. Anxiety is the feeling of being beset by a thousand non-existent dangers which have no concrete form—faceless dangers. So natural is it for us to live under the pressure of necessity and danger that anxiety appears to be the agony of being deprived of ordinary, everyday, indispensable danger, which is real, concrete and visible, and can be tackled and fought against. Anxiety is danger hidden in darkness. We cannot believe in the absence of danger; it seems like a treacherous trap. In order to save my life, I no longer have to flee from, or fight, a man or a tiger, but a whole army of invisible and intangible monsters. Danger is life. Anguish is mortal. It is the fear of unknown dangers. I am threatened, but by what, by whom? On which side must I defend myself? I strike the empty air with my fists. Danger is the fear of dying, or of being killed. Anguish is the fear of death.

THE GREATEST CRIME is homicide. Cain killed Abel. That is the supreme crime. I must kill my visible enemy, the one who is determined to take my life, to prevent him from killing me. Killing him gives me a feeling of relief, because I am dimly aware that, in killing him, I have killed death. My enemy's death cannot be held against me, it is no longer a source of anguish, if I killed him with the approval of society: that is the purpose of war. Killing is a way of relieving one's feelings, of warding off one's own death. The magic power of death. The magical effect of the act of killing. When the Germans were killing the Jews, all Germans had clear consciences; they were killing only in self-defence, since the Jews were supposed to want either to exterminate or conquer the whole world. Alternatively, the Jews were corrupting the health and virtues of the Aryan race, and this was just another way of killing. Supported by an ideology which sprang from the 20th-century Genesis produced by the Englishman, H. S. Chamberlain, and from the works of the Comte de Gobineau and the other, cruder French racialists of the 19th century, and also encouraged by the more recent and concrete memories of the Russian pogroms (pogrom is a Russian word, a Russian practice) and the Soviet death camps, and adding their own cruelty to the mixture, the Germans, being a race of thinkers, felt that their behaviour was justified.

Anti-semitism is not German in origin; it is Russian, Polish, and French. I will not go so far as to say that the Germans were naïvely sheeplike in their madness, but there had been earlier instances in other countries. The Germans only felt guilty when a much wider community repudiated and denounced them. At that moment, the entire German nation felt as one man that it had been condemned by society, committed for trial, in fact, by a society of nations. It is true that the outburst of hatred against humanity to which they had given vent is truly and objectively reprehensible. I have a horror tinged with a kind of admiration for those who take it upon themselves to kill without provocation, who decide to live as murderers, as free-lance operators in murder, the sort of people we refer to as vulgar criminals, professional murderers. What courage they have, what power of defiance, what strength of soul! Like Jean-Paul Sartre, such people have no super-ego. We now know that existence is aggression. We know, too, that society is made up of various parts and that the different social groups are at war with each other. We know that each group has a clear conscience, since it is a community. All that is needed to bring about the collapse of any social group or class is to instil a sense of guilt into it. In absolute terms, no one social group has any more right than any other to have a clear conscience or a guilty one.

What all propagandists set out to do is to undermine the clear conscience of a given social group while strengthening the sense of innocence of their own. Hippolyte Taine, with shrewder and deeper insight than Karl Marx, showed us long ago that the reason why the French aristocracy failed to survive was because of its realisation that it no longer served any useful purpose. The French nobility abdicated (*cf.* the Fourth of August, etc.). The class struggle only becomes acute, is only possible, when one class gives up the struggle. Of course, this same class may subsequently regret its action, recover its self-confidence and grasp the fact that other groups have no more valid grounds than itself for... etc. David Rousset clearly showed that a concentration camp is a society like all existing societies, and no different

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at all from all other social organisations: a concentration camp is society reduced to its essence, its quintessence. Kafka, too, made this clear; he described concentration camps before they existed. He knew.

Kafka, like Christ, assumed responsibility for universal guilt. Such was his sense of guilt. What are we guilty of? Of the crime against love. And Sigmund Freud, that other great Jew, that great rabbi who acted in accordance with the purest rabbinical tradition of the healing of souls, sought to exorcise hatred. The Jews invented love, love of others, paternal love and divine love. It is precisely for this reason that they have been accused of hating. Admittedly, they are grasping too, but so are we all; they are also capable of hatred, but it is much rarer among them.

IT IS impossible to imagine one's own death. We must try to do so, precisely because it is impossible.

Here is a knotted rope; I undo the knot. The knot is no longer there; what has happened to it? The rope remains and we can make other knots with it. I am a knot and I am the rope. Which is my more essential self, the knot or the rope?

FREUD, feeling himself unloved, realised that what everybody needed was to be loved. He also realised that we must not repress our aggressive feelings. We must live our lives in a spirit of loving aggressiveness. Aggressiveness oiled with love. This means that we can be killed more gently, very gently indeed.

Ritually.

ALL AT ONCE, a feeling of gladness and joy. It is many, many years since I experienced such a feeling. Everything seemed wearisome, uninteresting, dull and dreary: I was incapable of reading a book, or of being interested in a conversation or any form of entertainment. I averted my gaze. Everything was an effort, an irksome duty: whatever I did exhausted me, whether it was writing plays or watching them, attending social functions either for professional reason or reasons of friendship, or talking to some young writer, or to some foreign student interested in my "work." Literary fame held no interest for me either.

At the end of every sentence I uttered or heard uttered by someone else, between the lines of any page I happened to be reading, or as a sub-title inscribed on cinema screens or over walls and ceilings, there occurred the phrase: "What's the use?" Even desire was spent, having been destroyed, eaten away, by the "uselessness" of everything.

And then, suddenly, I experienced a feeling of joy, which I can only describe as senseless. But I must accept it as being senseless, admit that happiness can never be anything but senseless, and experience it intensely. I confess that from time to time during recent years, a promise, a faint glimmer of happiness, has occasionally lightened the dark expanse of my sadness; I would counter it with the usual objections: "What's the use?" or "What's the point?" or "That won't prevent me dying," or "We have no cause to be happy," and at once the faint glimmer of happiness would vanish and the familiar drabness close in around me once more. This time it is as if I had realised that joy is a gift from heaven: it is like grace, inexplicable, but self-evident, unquestionable. It cannot be explained, there is no reason for its existence, and that must be its only reason, the absence of reason being perhaps the only valid, possible and true reason. This becomes comprehensible if I tell myself that all the reasons we give ourselves for anything, no matter what, are either inadequate or false reasons, since we know nothing and our understanding is limited. This is tantamount to saying, as so many people have already said, that ignorance is the cause of our suffering, is perhaps its very substance. Since we are perforce ignorant, only one solution is possible: we must ignore our ignorance and be confident, carry on as if we knew.

And, in the upsurge of gladness which I experienced yesterday, the world appeared to me in a different light, in an entirely new light. It was as if the trees, the houses, people's faces, water and sky had been cleansed, as if everything had been made spick and span, had been renewed, refurbished. The main feeling was this intuitive one of cleanliness. And I felt that the world was once more becoming, had indeed become, interesting, very interesting. What had I been doing all this time? Where had I been? Who had prevented me looking and seeing? Now every tiny particle of the world seemed interesting to me, supremely interesting. Was it because of the virgin-like freshness of my inner world? My inner being had been renewed, my soul freed or rejuvenated. If I change, I change

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the world. Let us hope the sensation will last. If only the world could remain clean. If only it could keep that freshness for ever, and never again become soiled.

R. POOR, DEAR, LITTLE wisp of a thing, little wisp of being, weighed down with anxiety, suffering and love. I see her tiny figure darting like a squirrel from one room in the flat to another, from one section of my book-case to another, tidying things up, sorting them out or looking for some object, a pencil or my glasses, that I have just mislaid for the hundredth time in the past half-hour. Our home seems like a vast domain to her, she is so tiny and, like a meticulous ant, she is always busy putting things in order. She feels most at home in my study, filing my correspondence and sorting out my manuscripts. Here she feels happy. She is much more at home here than in the rest of the flat. Her world, or rather the centre of her world, lies here; here she finds the kind of air she can breathe. I myself am her domain, as if I were a house of which she were the tenant. If I tell her to stop sorting out my papers or my manuscripts, if she feels that she is annoying me in doing so, she is quite overcome. It is as if I were trying to drive her from her home. And, in fact, she is at home. I am her abode. Where else would she live? Her behaviour is probably true and authentic since it is irrational. It is not logical, nor stipulated in any contract; it is deeply felt, rooted in a kind of universal and permanent truth. Everything is irreplaceable. Can we change the place of the sun? Can we remove water or land from the world? Can we replace daylight or decide that there should be three cardinal points instead of four? I only have to be away from home, or show unconcern, for her whole world to collapse. Poor, dear, loving heart, who hates me and adores me. I am her house, which she has had built for herself or has herself constructed.

FOR HER it would be unthinkable to admit that a human being needs independence and that, as Rilke said, the finest gift you can offer the person you love is freedom; she does not understand words like independence or autonomy, which imply something of one's own that one needs to preserve. She does not feel this need. She does not know what independence means, since she belongs completely to the other person and the other person belongs completely to her. I feel the need for freedom: this is something she cannot understand, since for her the only freedom is that shared by two people.

IT IS SAID that jealousy is a fault; we must not be jealous, jealousy is an unlovely sentiment. Jealousy rules the world. Any human being is jealous from the day of his birth; cats are jealous, dogs are jealous, doves are jealous, a tiger is jealous as only a tiger can be. Flowers and trees are jealous; God is a jealous God. We are jealous because we cannot live without love. She is jealous because only one being can give her love; from only one being can she accept the love she cannot help demanding of this being. It is impossible to deprive her of love. She cannot be prevented from breathing; she cannot not be loved; not to love her would be to kill her. Therefore, I am bound to love her. Obviously, we ought to entertain jealous feelings, but jealousy ought not to get the better of us. It is all a question of degree.

But is she to blame for having a heart bigger than herself? She has more passion than she can accommodate. She is like a river which overflows because its bed is too narrow.

WE OUGHT TO HAVE only one thought, one aim: the happiness of others; we ought all to throw ourselves at each others' feet.

We ought to have, towards others and towards ourselves, the attitude of a man watching a blue-bottle beating against a window without realising that one of the panes is open. Let us open the window wide so that it can escape.

Fine words.

WE ARE ludicrous creatures. We are comical. It is in this light that we should see ourselves. Only humour, whether rose-tinted, black or cruel, humour alone, can restore our serenity.

I shall no longer write with serious intent. I shall write only to make people laugh. I ought even to stop writing altogether, but I must perforce produce plays and short-stories, since I am a professional writer and that is my function. But, in actual fact, it all amounts to very little. Literature is just a way of working off energy. What did I do in the dream about the wall? I neither scaled the wall, nor demolished it, nor even tried to demolish it; I walked round it. I talk and talk and this allows me to do nothing at all. Literature relieves my feelings, it is an

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alibi, it is an excuse for avoiding action. I shall write no more . . . unless it be to construct objects, semblances of microcosms.

THE BOURGEOIS EXPLOITER did not hate the proletariat he exploited. The socialist states, when they are neither exhausted, corrupt nor decadent, hate not only the former exploiters but also their children and grandchildren. (As if everything were turning into racialism; the fact that a single generation has been punished is not enough to satisfy vengeance. The Bible tells us that the Hebrews, on their return from the Babylonian captivity, very understandably experienced a thirst for vengeance and a hatred of everything even slightly foreign; thus, not only were true foreigners impure but also any Jew one of whose parents was a foreigner, and the parents in their turn were considered as foreigners if one of their parents had been a foreigner; the cattle belonging to a foreigner, as well as his domestic animals and servants, were also impure and ought to be exterminated. His house was also impure and had to be burned down so that the stones might be purified.) But the socialist states hate and mistrust even their own citizens, and those among them who refused to allow themselves to be exploited, *i.e.*, to be alienated from themselves through the renunciation of their freedom, were sent away to be forcibly exploited in the concentration camps, and sometimes were even forcibly alienated from themselves through extermination. Of course, exploitation such as this was not called the exploitation of man by man but was referred to as the free and enthusiastic acceptance of voluntary labour, whence the ironic expression "voluntary forced labour."

We can laugh at this now, because the deception has become obvious: such was not the case until quite recently, and if you happened to say to a progressive that all North Africans were not joyfully dying for freedom, which incidentally they have never achieved and have, in fact, given up hoping for since they won their independence, or that among the workers of Russia there might be one solitary individual who was not completely happy, the rich Parisian progressive would call you a reactionary or a traitor in the pay of American capitalism. For that is what the present-day progressive will accuse you of, whereas his father, who held the progressive views of his day, would have accused you of being a traitor in the pay of Moscow. All you get in the way of a reply is the famous slogan: the exploitation of man by man does not, and cannot, exist in Russia; there, the whole community is quite simply at the service of the state. And if you don't accept this fact, it is because "we don't speak the same language." There is, apparently, bourgeois language (in which it is nevertheless possible to detect the exploitation of man by man) corresponding to a middle-class mentality; there is also, apparently, the language of Socialism corresponding to the mentality and ideology of revolutionaries. (But not to the mentality of the working class: there is always a gulf between the revolution and the lower classes. The "revolutionaries" are thinkers, middle-class ideologists, who use language which is understood by the lower classes only imperfectly or not at all: what happens, one might say, is that the lower classes talk and think in "middle-class" terms.) If you propose to clarify this linguistic ambiguity, people will shrug their shoulders. This initial "bad faith" is the cause of what is referred to to-day as the "language crisis," about which we are constantly being lectured to by a host of learned idiots.

To return for a moment to the middle-class exploiters—they were not cruel, but indifferent. They did not hate the workers, they despised them or occasionally pitied them. And in the end they even developed a bad conscience which prompted them to relinquish their position, just as the aristocracy had done before them. And to-day we see them beating their breasts and hurling abuse at the middle classes, *i.e.*, at themselves, even though the middle classes are no longer aggressive, no longer cause the alienation of the worker, since the trade unions are fortunately quite capable of defending their interests in that respect, while, as everyone knows, but as cannot be repeated too often, tyranny and exploitation are rife in the opposite camp, although the papers try to hide the fact under a mass of deceptive propaganda. Had the middle classes been shrewd, they might have maintained that the establishment of an industrial society demanded, in its early stages, the sacrifice of the majority of the population: moreover, the affirmation that such a sacrifice was necessary would not have constituted either an act of deception or a "language crisis."

A DREAM, too incoherent and disjointed to be described; besides, I have almost forgotten it. There remain the words: "Here comes the sheriff," spoken by a blonde; I can see the

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sheriff coming in with his badge—the police again. I see another man with a black beard disappearing into the crowd.

APART FROM THOSE rare moments of ecstatic euphoria in my youth when I seemed to be aware of an absolute presence and had the feeling that everything was justified—more than that: redeemed—apart also from those childhood moments of plenitude I enjoyed at La Chapelle-Anthenaise, I have never experienced any profound joy. Of course, my sadness, which has no discernible cause, my despair, my generalised anguish, were often concealed by various kinds of happiness (happiness is not joy) which more or less filled my inner void—my engagement, my marriage, fatherhood, professional satisfactions, my half-gratifying, half-intolerable celebrity; all these things were important, they allowed me moments of forgetfulness, but were powerless to solve anything whatever, powerless to console me for the tragedy of feeling lost in a world that is doomed to die. I have never been able to overcome the overwhelming weariness, the tremendous mental and physical fatigue, which has weighed heavily upon me all my life and deprived me of enjoyment: I have always felt ill at ease in life, never "at home," always aware of the unhappiness of others around me, as well as being saturated with my own and conscious that life is infernal, unacceptable. Since people all hate one another, they can only relieve their feelings by killing each other, or opposing each other, by lying and deliberately suffering through others in order to avoid suffering on their own behalf. Being neither a masochist, a sadist, nor a political fanatic, I believe I have always been clear-sighted, rather naïvely and perhaps inadequately so, perhaps, but by and large I have seen things as they really are. I understand why people make war on each other, why they struggle; I understand why they themselves don't want to understand. I am perfectly aware that the ideologies, the philosophies and various other reasons they give themselves are no more than unconscious or semi-conscious alibis and justifications for their passions, for some hidden despair.... I know, I also know, that they will never admit this and will go on refusing to clear their minds of cant, even at a time when there is so much talk about getting rid of cant. A mind capable of a higher form of lucidity would have a better grasp not only of the reasons for unreason but, above all, of the reasons behind unreason. This superior form of lucidity would laugh at my own limited, empirical lucidity: I do not possess that superior lucidity which brings serenity. It is, however, better to have an inferior sort of lucidity rather than none at all: better that than to be deluded, like all the people who rush about, talk, and think they are thinking.

NO, NEVER AT ANY MOMENT have I been able to feel at ease in this world of unhappiness and death, for which I have felt powerless to do anything whatsoever: every action turns out badly. My sadness, weariness, disgust and fear have grown worse with the years. So, I have done my job, I have said that there is nothing to be said. I "have written," to use a painful expression; writing, for me, has been almost insurmountably difficult, and the more lighthearted my writing appeared, the more it increased my distress. It became impossible for me to write comedies, or almost impossible: I therefore began writing more sombre dramas, in order to relieve my anxiety. It gives me a kind of satisfaction to write about wretchedness and anguish: how can we talk of other things when we are aware of the inevitability of death? Humanity is what it is through horror and anger at being mortal. Masochism, sadism, destruction and self-destruction, wars, revolts and revolutions, men's hatred of each other, all are caused, consciously or unconsciously, by our feeling that death is imminent, by the fear of death, whether or not they are transferred or transformed symptoms of that fear. We do not feel at ease in this world, we are not at home here. As long as we are not assured of immortality, we shall never be fulfilled, we shall go on hating each other in spite of our need for mutual love. Alas! how could we, creatures of unhappiness that we are, not fear the worst from other creatures of unhappiness? Each of us hates in others the mortal being he himself is. A maxim: my children, mistrust one another.

AND YET, AND YET, there are the teachings of the admirable Hasidic Rabbis, who knew what love was, who knew how love could be achieved and who could help us to re-learn the lesson of love, were we not both deaf and blind. The science of love. Neither destroy your enemies, since basically there are no enemies, only people whom we mistakenly believe to be our enemies,

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nor shun the earth, but rather purify it, *i.e.*, reawaken the human conscience. Unite the relative with the absolute, make blindness have faith in a kind of wisdom. But blindness can never be anything other than blindness: sadistic murderers accused innocent people of killing Christian children and drinking their blood; the greedy, projecting their own impulses on to wise men, reproached them with greed, and imperialists accused them of wishing to conquer the world.

Humanism, that so-called, smugly self-satisfied humanism, the crude violence from which crude philosophies have been evolved, the aberrations which are passed off as revolutionary and are characterised by a more refined, vicious and subtly diabolical hatred, so cunning as to be far more difficult to detect than the stupidity of crude reactionaries—all these things which are distilled by us, seep into us, exude from us, fall back upon us and which we structuralise and monumentalise, all these combine to form what is called "culture."

I TOO HAVE my hatreds, I am not immune to the epidemic—the disease is, in fact, endemic—but in spite of all, in my case it is intermingled with a kind of indifference which allows me to remain aloof. But for this indifference, which dilutes my anger and anxiety, tempering their force just as water added to wine reduces its potency, I would not even have been able to say what I have just said, I would have torn up the sheet of paper and smashed everything. Am I right in thinking that I do not hate for the sake of hating, that it is only hatred that I hate? But of course this is true of everyone; and that is why everyone has become filled with hatred.

"LIE DOWN on the couch; there, like that. Are you comfortable? Good. Breathe deeply. In, out. Breathe normally. Imagine that your arm is very heavy. Say to yourself: 'My right arm is very relaxed and heavy. My left arm is very relaxed and heavy. My arm is very heavy.' Imagine that your head is tilting slightly backwards. Keep your eyes tightly closed. Imagine that your shoulders feel light. 'My shoulders feel so light.' Imagine that your right leg is heavy. Say to yourself: 'I am very relaxed and my leg is very heavy.' Both your legs feel very heavy. Say to yourself that your heart is on your left side. Be conscious of the beating of your heart. Say to yourself: 'My heart is beating with a slow, regular rhythm, my heart is beating with a slow, regular rhythm.' Imagine that you are conscious of your stomach and intestines. You are conscious of the blood circulating in your stomach. Say to yourself: 'I can feel the blood circulating through my stomach, I am conscious of my intestines.' Imagine that your pelvis is heavy, that it is pressing on the couch, that the couch is supporting it. Say to yourself: 'My pelvis is sinking into the couch.' Fine. Breathe normally. Now, breathe deeply, in, out, in, out. Open your eyes. Stretch, like a cat, with enjoyment. You may yawn. Fine, that's exactly right. Your pulse is much less rapid than it was; it is now back to normal. You noticed, when I raised your arm a moment ago, that it dropped back again, because it had really become heavy. How beautiful a face or a body look when they are completely relaxed! All the vital forces are present, not as in sleep but in a state of repose. This is what is meant by relaxation. How beautiful a body looks when it is relaxed and alive!"

After he came out of the consulting-room, he was asked: "What has happened to you during the past half-hour? You are smiling and quite relaxed; you are not the same, you look years younger." His inner monsters had had a rest, had had a chance to yawn and relax. Now they were ready to leap out at other people with all claws showing.

PEOPLE do not change, but their circumstances do. I may find myself in better or worse conditions, but it is always I who am at the centre, unchanged in my intrinsic essence. Put a plant in the sun and it will grow; deprive it of water and it will wither; yet, whether yellow or green, withered or blooming, it is still the same plant in spite of its different reactions to the various conditions to which it is subjected. The chameleon changes colour whenever it needs to do so for reasons of self-defence, but this does not mean that it ceases to be a chameleon. It does not become part of the environment with which it has blended; it does not become the leaf whose appearance it has assumed. It is always the same chameleon. Thus, from the outset, we are, we do not become; essence precedes existence; reactions may vary but that essence remains unchanged. We are not moulded by history. Occasionally it is moulded by us. Things do not mould us because

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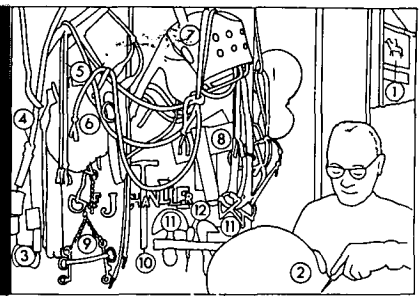
THE SADDLER



ON THE ROLLING Wiltshire Downs lies the old town of Marlborough. Here, Frederick Chandler, Saddler, established a business in 1796 which has remained unbroken throughout eight generations. Address: Frederick J. Chandler, London Road, Marlborough, Wiltshire. (Shell Touring Map No. 1 from your dealer.)

The increased popularity of riding, pony trekking and show jumping, has brought the saddler new prosperity. The Chandlers specialise in the making of racing saddles, the lightest of which is a mere eight ounces in weight.

On entering the shop door, above which hangs the saddler's sign **1**, one immediately notices the odour of new leather and tarred twine, distinctive to all saddlers.

Behind the shop, father and son work at their benches making saddles from carefully selected cow hide, or, for the very best, soft and supple pig skin: **2** shows a race exercise saddle being prepared for stitching. On the wall hang many tools of the saddler's trade and pieces of saddlery, including saddlers' quilting thread **3**, a martingale **4**, gaily coloured tail strings **5**, race ankle boots **6**, a bar muzzle **7**, race webbs **8** and bits of various pattern **9**. Convenient to hand hangs a saddler's hammer **10**, knives **11** and an awl **12**.

Close by the church at the opposite end of the town's main street is the equally fascinating shop of another leather worker, Roger Upton, a keen and expert falconer. Address: Leathercraft, 78-79 High Street, Marlborough, Wiltshire.

England and Wales have many such skilled craftsmen bringing centuries-old traditional techniques to bear on modern production problems. You can write for a list to the Rural Industries Bureau, 35 Camp Road, Wimbledon Common, London, S.W.19.

Also, the free monthly leaflet '*Go Shell*,' covering local events and information in your area, is available from your Shell station.

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we have already been moulded. Things force us to alternate from one state to another, but I acknowledge all these states as belonging to me, not as moulding me; I *suffer* them, I *possess* them. I could never have been, could never be, someone else: I may do something good or bad; I do not become the evil itself, the goodness, the falsehood or the truth. It is not, therefore, a question of changing, but of rediscovering oneself, rediscovering what is unchangeable in the temporary changes which the self undergoes in its contact with the world. People have a tendency to confuse changes of state or situation with some imaginary essential change. Whether I happen to be in a state of irritation, of good or bad health, of well-being or uneasiness, is, in the last resort, a matter external to myself. Were I a farm-labourer, a bourgeois, a workman, etc., I should be quite different from another farm labourer, bourgeois or worker. Just as an actor remains the same through many different parts. A cat does not become a cat, it is a cat from birth; it will behave like a cat, nothing will ever change its cat-like nature. It will not learn how to be a cat; it knows how to be one. I believe in the idea that there are cats. That is why I am inclined, illogically perhaps, to believe in spite of everything that we are not cut off from immortality. It allows me to hope, too, that serenity, a kind of indifference, will ultimately prove stronger than my anger and despair. In the final analysis, human nature cannot be hateful. Its good or bad moods are temporary psychological modifications—various states which neither destroy nor modify it in any essential respect.

I BELIEVE I have always been absolutely faithful to myself. I have not changed. Ever since I became aware of myself, my feelings, my thoughts, my very being, have been characterised by a kind of unchangingness, which has remained unaffected by events, by life. I can recognise myself in what I thought, in what I was, at the age of seventeen. I have remained impervious to the appeal of the various forms of heresy and fanaticism that have succeeded each other since then. Before I was ever able to find the answers, the reasons for my non-acceptance, I remained instinctively intractable, having no other argument or reason to offer than the deep, mute reason of the heart, with the private reservation that I would formulate my objections at some later date. I was what I was. I am what I have been. I very soon learned to be alone, because my thoughts were not the same as those of other people. My intrinsic nature made it impossible that they should be. But solitude does not imply isolation; it is not a barrier cutting me off from the rest of the world; it is a shield, a breast-plate, which defends my liberty and allows me to keep a cool head, in spite of the fiery furnace into which I am plunged by my fury, revulsion, and terror. As far as possible, I continue to communicate with others, over the barrier.

AFTER I told my mother I was going to be married, she went to my fiancée's house and, when the latter opened the door, my mother, although she knew her well and had known her for quite a long time, looked at her for a moment as if she were faced with someone quite different: she was looking at her with different eyes, as happens when we view some landscape from a new angle and it seems different: a friend, the daughter of a friend, who was nevertheless a stranger, was unexpectedly about to become her nearest relation, someone approximating to a daughter, almost another me, almost another self, someone for whom she had always been waiting, someone whose coming she had anticipated, whom she did not recognise yet seemed to have known since the beginning of time, the person who, from the outset, had been appointed, imposed and chosen by fate. This was the princess, her successor, who would soon take her place as queen. My future wife returned my mother's gaze; my mother had tears in her eyes but controlled her emotion, and her lips, which trembled slightly, had an indescribable expression. I do not know how far they were conscious of what they were conveying to each other without any words being spoken. It was a silent interchange, a kind of brief ritual which they were rediscovering spontaneously, and which must have been handed down from time immemorial: it was a kind of transmission of powers. In that moment, my mother resigned her position and handed me over to my wife. The expression on my mother's face signified quite clearly: he no longer belongs to me, he belongs to you. What a host of silent injunctions, what sadness and happiness, what fears and hopes and self-denial were conveyed in her expression! In this unspoken dialogue I had no part; it was a dialogue between one woman and another.

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The ritual lasted only a few moments, but it must have been performed according to the rules, in obedience to some very ancient law; and since it was a mystery, my wife acquiesced in it, played the sacred game and, submitting to a will and a power which transcended them both, bound me to her and herself to me for all eternity. She has never tried to release herself from this commitment. She has never known another man. I have sometimes wanted to break my commitment, for brief, or not so brief, moments, but such escapades produce an effect of sacrilege. My mother handed me over to my wife, who took me into her charge and subsequently became my only relative, more of a mother to me than my own mother, my sister, an eternal fiancée, my child, my comrade-in-arms. I am sure that things happened this way; I am convinced that my wife, after taking me into her charge, has never at any time been able or willing to relinquish the responsibility and that the bond has remained unbroken because the sacred commitment has exercised its power.

My mother died three months after my marriage.

A DREAM FROM THE PAST.

A few years ago, my wife, my daughter and myself spent our holidays in England. We lived for about a month with an English friend, D. She had a very charming 17th-century house with a beautiful garden. She accommodated her guests in a more modern wing, while she herself lived at the other end of the house with her two children. Next to the room with twin beds which we were given, and separated from it by a thin wall, was my daughter's room with a single bed. A few days after our arrival, I had a strange and rather terrifying dream: I was surrounded by a dozen or more doctors dressed in white. One of them said to me: "We have to perform an operation on your brain."—"That's not very pleasant, but go ahead if it's necessary." Suddenly the doctors vanished. One came back to tell me that they had all been mistaken, that there was nothing whatever the matter with me and that I could go home. Since the whole business appeared suspicious, I implored the doctor to tell me the truth: "I have an inoperable, cancerous tumour on the brain and that is why you want me to leave; I implore you to tell me the truth." "Very well," replied the doctor, "since you want to know the truth, you have incurable cancer of the brain."

At this point I woke up in a state of acute anxiety. It was dawn and a wan light was coming through the windows. I remembered a friend of mine who had died a long time before of a cancerous tumour on the brain. One of the symptoms of the illness had been the loss of the sense of direction. When he wanted to go to the right, he would find himself moving to the left. If he wanted to reach the door, he would find himself near the window. So I got up, dripping with perspiration and, to set my mind at rest, tested myself to see if I still had a sense of direction. So I headed for the window, and got there. Then I said to myself: "Let's try for the door"; I reached it very accurately. I was relieved. Nevertheless, being still under the effect of the shock, I continued to pad about the room in order to reach the various objectives that I set myself, one after the other: the bed-side table, the far window, the wardrobe, the opposite wall, then again the first wall, and so on. My wife, who had been wakened by my restless movements, opened an astonished eye and enquired whether I had gone mad. I replied that I did not think so, and explained the reasons for this new *"Voyage autour de ma chambre."* She answered that it was madness to take a dream seriously. I went back to bed, but could not fall asleep again. About 9 o'clock, we went to have breakfast in the dining-room at the other end of the house. Our hostess and my daughter were there already. The latter hailed me with the words: "Daddy, I heard you snoring through the bedroom wall. You were snoring very loud."—"I couldn't have been snoring. In the first place I don't snore, and secondly I happened to be awake."—"Yes, you were snoring and making a very loud noise, and it was a peculiar kind of snore." I was about to protest when Mrs. D. said to my daughter: "Yes, dear, it probably was your father snoring." Somewhat surprised, I said no more. As soon as my daughter left the room, Mrs. D. turned to me and said: "I apologise. It was not you snoring, it was my grandfather. It was not a snore, it was the death-rattle. My grandfather died seven years ago, on August 8th, and to-day is the anniversary of his death. On the morning of every anniversary and at the time at which he died, he produces this death-rattle. Don't be alarmed, he doesn't do anything else."—"I know what your grandfather died of and how he died," I said. "He died of a cancerous tumour on the brain; he had been taken to hospital, the doctors intended

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to operate on him, then they abandoned the idea because, as one of the doctors told him at his own request, the tumour was inoperable. This is how he happened to die at home."—"How do you know all this?" asked Mrs. D. "What you say is absolutely true."—"Because I dreamed it all last night," I replied.

Since the night of my dream, the death-rattle has never been heard again. It is as if I had taken it upon myself. The dead man gave no sign either on the 8th August of the following year, or on the second anniversary after our visit. Mrs. D.'s parents, *i.e.*, the dead man's daughter and son-in-law, moved back into the wing of the house; they had previously moved out into another house they had had built a hundred and fifty yards away.

A DREAM I HAD LAST NIGHT.

I can only recall fragmentary scenes. Sombre colours, black and dark grey. I seemed to be in an old, rather neglected and dilapidated suburb or village with my maternal grandfather and grandmother: it was a strange place with which I was unfamiliar, and it appeared to be my grandparents' birth-place. I cannot remember how I had got there; certain things had happened; there had been discussions of which I retain only the vaguest recollection. Two of my uncles were present; they are still alive, very old, and one has a beard. I can still see a low-ceilinged room on the ground-floor with a sort of pallet-bed, two perhaps. Was I being told that my grandfather was already dead, was dying or about to die? Was I being told, or telling myself, the same thing about my grandmother? I could see her as she was when she was alive, dark and without a single grey hair, in spite of her advanced years. I was in the town hall of the town or suburb, in the Registrar's Office. There were several clerks and the one I had addressed my enquiry to was quite young. I felt happy to be there, perhaps because my reason for coming had been to discover the real name, the maiden name, of my grandmother's mother, which we did not know, perhaps because she had kept it secret; my great-grandmother had possibly been of dubious social origin. She may have belonged to some persecuted or banned racial group. But I was determined to know about my forbears. The clerk told me that, as it happened, the only place where I could find out my great-grandmother's name was the town hall of the little village where we now were, because it was the only little village in the world which still possessed complete records of everybody, whether or not they were natives of that particular old parish.

In the scenes of the dream, in the setting of the old, low-ceilinged house, my grandmother was a sorry sight: very shabbily dressed, almost like a tramp, repulsive and filthy. Suddenly, she was outside the house, in a small yard surrounded by a low stone wall. The ground was muddy, hardened mud. The sky was still sombre and the houses round about were low-roofed and still filthy. But there was my grandmother, completely rejuvenated, wearing a beautiful bright dress and looking beautiful and different, yet surrounded by a large number of children, her children: in fact, she had twelve. Her youth had been restored because she had changed her name, which had been keeping her apart from society and forcing her even further into old age. By changing her name, she had started an inevitable process of rejuvenation. As I looked at her, I was seized by an indefinable emotion—a kind of uneasiness about whether this ought or could happen, a feeling that it was perhaps not quite proper. On my right, to the right of the yard, was a small, two-storied, ramshackle house, which could well have been the house we had been in a short while before seen from the outside; one of my two old uncles, who was a very sick man, now went into it. He had scarcely got inside when the house caught fire and went up in flames. Firemen in their red uniforms arrived on a red fire-engine.

I did not see the end of the fire, nor the new house which replaced the old one, the one that had just caught fire. Nor did I succeed in discovering the name of my grandmother's mother, the name that I had been looking for, that I am still looking for....

OUR FRIEND Sorana Gurian died a few years ago, after a serious illness. For a period of months, or even for a year or more, she was kept alive from day to day by injections.

The psychotherapist, Michel M., decided that Sorana was living in a state of inhuman, intolerable anguish. He resolved to do something for her, to help her as best he could. He went to the hospital one day, then the next, then every day for three months. He felt it was his responsibility to teach Sorana to die, to instruct her about death. He succeeded in this difficult

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task. One morning, Sorana quietly informed the doctor who had come to give her her daily injection that she did not want any more and that, wishing to remain wholly conscious until the last moment, she did not want to be drugged either. A week later she died, as she wished to die, with dignity.

I HAVE too much vitality, and therefore I have too strong a desire to live. Hence my obsession with death. This need to live is what must be resolved, destroyed, or at least seriously weakened. Once the reasons for living are truly known, they cease to exist.

In order to conquer one's own death, one must become a free man. Death should be neither a release nor a trap. It should be an act of conquest, an ascent. The true road to death lies along the road to freedom.

We must not kill anyone. On the other hand, if we can accept the anguish and death of another person, we in turn can die. How can we accept someone else's death? By telling ourselves that, in the final analysis, it is the best thing that can happen to him. How can I bear his sorrow, his burden? By telling myself that everyone must bear his own burden, by telling myself that the other person too must bear his share of the world's unhappiness.

I TRY TO EVADE his anguish, just as I try to evade my own. I prevent him from plumbing the depths of his anguish and overcoming it, just as I am incapable of plumbing the depths of my own anguish until I finally succeed in overcoming it. I offer solace to us both, and this is a dangerous game. If I resist and master my own anguish then I can resist and master someone else's anguish and have a healing influence over him.

Death is not a descent.

Z. TELLS ME that psychologists have always known about premonitory and clairvoyant dreams. We cannot believe in them in the West because, for us, events take place in time. We think in terms of causality. For us there is always a before and an after, the latter being the effect of the former. Before, after, causality, time. The Eastern races, whose mode of thought we dismiss, are not understood by Western man because they see everything as part of a web of correlations and significances. This is obviously a different way of explaining the world to oneself, truth never being anything more than the explanation we are capable of giving of something or of things in general. In order to accept phenomena which, to us, appear strange or absurd, we should quite simply have to replace our historical, causal mode of thought by a spatial mode. A spatial, not a temporal system of concepts. Were it possible for us to think neither historically nor spatially, we should be freer still, we should have a different figurative representation of the world or rather, since any figure exists in space, a non-figurative explanation of the world.

ONCE AGAIN, do I really want salvation?—I was about to ask: do I really want to be saved?, but saved reminds me of life-saving or of saving one's skin by running away. Do I really want self-fulfilment, self-knowledge? Do I really want to be master both of my life and my death, or do I just want to go on turning out literature?

Translated by John Weightman

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Column

I DON'T know what others made of the election, but it frightened me. No doubt, Mr. Wilson deliberately played it cool. Mr. Heath, starting as an outsider, signally failed to generate the passion, conflict and controversy which alone would have given him a possibility of snatching victory from defeat. The result was that one of the distinguishing features of the election was the apathy of the electorate. It is a remarkable reflection, both of the state of the country, and the policies of the Labour party, that Socialism has returned to power with a greatly increased majority, not on a wave of radical enthusiasm, but simply as a going concern which no one sees any particular reason to change.

Yet a going concern is precisely what Britain is not at the present time. During the present government's period of office, if it runs its full term, decisions will have to be taken which will fundamentally effect Britain's future. They will concern the whole form and content of the national economy and the part, if any, which Britain has to play in Europe and the world. The frightening thing about the election was that no party succeeded in convincing the electorate that in casting their votes they were making a genuine choice, and were taking a crucial decision about their own and the country's future. Whether the parties or the electorate were most to blame for this is another matter.

Electoral apathy was all the more remarkable because, as a result of television, the parties never had so great an opportunity to appeal to all the voters, directly, face-to-face, and in the intimacy of their own homes. There was a greater degree of, as they say, "audience participation" in the electoral campaign than ever before. Perhaps indeed that was the trouble. There is all the difference in the world between an electorate genuinely engaged in the process of arriving at a political decision, and an audience conditioned to viewing events and persons as entertainments designed for their amusements and distraction. Moreover, all the techniques of television today are designed to conform to government regulations that the tendency of programmes shall not be "controversial"; yet controversial is precisely what political propaganda is and must be if it is to effect political decisions.

It would be too much to expect that either those who watch, or those who produce and perform on television, should suddenly, for a period of three weeks, throw off all the habits, attitudes and assumptions acquired as a result of thousands of hours of viewing. How could one conduct a Midlothian campaign by television?

I have never greatly believed, in the theatre, in Brecht's famous *Verfremdungseffekt*, a style of presentation and acting designed to summon the audience, not to be entertained or amused, but to exercise a judgment on what is happening on the stage, in full awareness of the matters that are being judged. But I wish that, for political purposes, television would develop its own *V-effekt*, designed for just such a purpose. Otherwise television threatens to become a genuine degradation of the political process, in which politicians have value only as performers, and their policies only as studio scripts.

No DOUBT Messrs. Robin Day, Robert Kee, Ian Trethowan *et al.* try to introduce the note of controversy into their programmes; sometimes indeed only they succeed in giving them a genuine political point. But no one takes this shadow play seriously, because everyone knows that interviewers and programme masters are in no way committed to the conflict of interest and forces which is what politics are about. They are simply hired entertainers pretending to be politicians, while politicians pretend to be television personalities.

No one today can estimate the political effect of television, but its influence may be of a kind we have not as yet understood, and it may have some sinister implications. We may yet find that its effect may have been to destroy democratic political processes as we have hitherto known them. The time may not be far distant, perhaps indeed it is already with us, when an election may take the form of a television series, performed by actors nominated by the parties in strict proportion to their parliamentary representation, and decided by an opinion poll conducted by independent psephologists under the chairmanship of Professor Robert McKenzie.

*

IT WAS A RELIEF, after television, to attend the three parties' daily Press conferences in Smith Square, for there at least one could see the party spokesmen in flesh and blood, "live" in a sense that they can never be on the screen. At Transport House, Mr. Callaghan was a genial and kindly uncle, bland, confident, slightly complacent. He took care to convey to us that his words had behind them a weight,

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of the Treasury, of 11 Downing Street, of the Cabinet, which the Opposition's could never have. He spoke with authority and not as the scribes. And the ease, almost nonchalance, with which he bore its burden seemed to assure us that there could not possibly be anything alarming in the dark secrets which he shared with his financial colleagues and the gnomes in Zurich.

One felt this all the more because from time to time Mr. Callaghan, like some jovial ecclesiastic on the best of terms with the divinity, reminded us that he spoke not merely for the government, but for the Prime Minister himself, in so far as Mr. Wilson had chosen to unveil his thoughts. Mr. Callaghan was but an attendant lord; Prince Hamlet was elsewhere. It was a masterly performance, and one left Transport House feeling there could not be much wrong with a church in which the services were so well conducted, and by such a jolly parson.

At Conservative Central Office, things were rather different. In person Mr. Heath was altogether more impressive and, one must add, attractive, than one had been led to believe by the mass media. Why, I wondered idly, are Conservatives today so photogenically unfortunate? Mr. Heath himself, Sir Alec, of blessed memory, Quintin Hogg, Mr. Macleod; there are moments when one feels one is watching a film made by some crazed director in the Conservative Central Office who has allotted all the star parts to elves, goblins, hypermaniacs.

At Mr. Heath's conference, one was able to forget all this. One felt in the presence of a powerful and efficient piece of machinery; Mr. Justice Holmes would certainly have counted Mr. Heath among the buzz-saws, even while he relegated most of his colleagues among the kitchen implements. One was even aware, when Mr. Heath gave one of his surprisingly engaging smiles, that the machine had charm. But even more surprising was that the machine was nervous. There was a certain tension, an air almost of defiance, a sudden slight rictus of the lips and mouth, in Mr. Heath's face as he waited for a question, like a candidate at a *viva* who knows he must be at the top of his form if he is not to fail. This was disconcerting to his audience.

But why should Mr. Heath feel nervous? He is after all one of the toughest and most professional of politicians, knows every trick of the game, is equipped by intellect and experience for any situation that might arise. The answer is, I think, that during this election too much was being asked of Mr. Heath. He was being asked, first of all, to present the Conservative case to the electorate in such a way that it would appear demonstrably superior to the Labour Party's, and to this task, I feel sure, Mr. Heath at least felt himself more than adequate. But, secondly, he had to invest the Conservative case with the emotional force and appeal which wins votes, and Mr. Heath does not find it easy to appeal to the emotions; the strings are false, the notes are few. He should study how a cold fish like Mr. Wilson has learned to simulate a red-blooded animal. And lastly, Mr. Heath had to convince his own party, even while he was losing the election, that he was still the right man to lead them through the years in the wilderness and to show that even in defeat he had established his claim on their continued loyalty and devotion. Mr. Heath, I think, did not feel that he was quite up to this, and perhaps this is not surprising. In the present state of the Conservative Party it would require a Parnell, and Mr. Heath, for all his ability, is not a Parnell.

From the Conservatives to the Liberals: like passing from some temple of an established, if declining faith, to the conventicle of a dissenting sect. Lord Byers, lavish of slightly forced *bonhomie*, addressed us in a style which was something between that of a company director and a good battalion commander. Professor Max Beloff, who was rather improbably there to support him, gave us a passionate little homily on the defects of our governmental machinery, in tones which combined faded echoes of the Oxford Union with the fervour of a missionary preaching to the heathen. One felt that this was interesting, but nothing to do with the election, and was sharply aware that here one was confronted strictly by amateurs, gifted no doubt, but hardly in the battle at all; gallant, if ageing, guerilla leaders, operating with hand-made grenades and Molotov cocktails, far from the main scene of action.

*

All this, perhaps happily for all concerned, is now over, and we are all very little the wiser. The election did nothing to clarify any of the major issues with which the government is now faced. We know neither how nor whether the pound has been, is, can or should be saved; so far as Europe is concerned, we can only understand from the Prime Minister and his colleagues that they are anxious to enter Europe, on conditions which Europe cannot accept. We shall be proud to be members of a Community which is based on a common agricultural policy, and aims at a closer political unity, so long as we are permitted to buy cheap food elsewhere and can claim unrestricted national sovereignty.

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Mr. Wilson is quite incorrigible in his nostalgia for an empire which has ceased to exist, and his faith in a Commonwealth which is on the point of disintegration, and this betrays itself, willy-nilly, in every reference he makes to the possibility of Britain entering the Common Market. In this, of course, he is far more representative of traditional conservative feeling than Mr. Heath is, and this perhaps partly explains his victory at the polls. As a result, the country may have got what it quite genuinely wants; that is, a Labour government pursuing what is essentially a conservative policy. To a majority of the electorate this may well seem the best of all possible worlds; it may very well turn out to be the worst.

There are other respects in which the new government is far more conservative than the New Conservatism represented by Mr. Heath. Historically, the Conservative party has always claimed to represent the great established interests in English life: the Church, the Monarchy, the landed interest, the Army, finance capital, the Empire, and later the Commonwealth. But time and change have steadily eroded these bastions of conservative power, and in its passion to modernise itself and the country the Conservative party has found itself increasingly compelled to look elsewhere for new sources of political vitality, and to abandon the causes with which it has been historically identified. It is Mr. Heath who today, in the case of Rhodesia, finds his loyalty to the Crown called in question, and Mr. Wilson who denounces the treachery of negotiating with a rebel. It is Mr. Heath who today, in the interest of abolishing retail price maintainance, sacrifices the small tradesman who for years has obediently given the Conservatives his vote, and Mr. Wilson who seeks to protect him against the encroachment of large-scale marketing. It is Mr. Heath who unequivocally demands our entry into Europe; it is Mr. Wilson who proclaims that entry into Europe must not be bought at the expense of a century-old policy of cheap food which for him has become an essential element in the traditional British way of life.

Such examples could be multiplied; and it is perhaps because Mr. Heath has so totally abandoned the ground on which Conservatism has historically stood, and Mr. Wilson has so smartly occupied what he has abandoned, that Mr. Heath's electoral campaign so signally failed to stir his supporters to enthusiasm. This is not intended as a criticism of Mr. Heath; it is simply that, in listening to his speeches, one so often felt that one was listening to a set of abstract principles which did not represent any coherent body of public opinion or of organised interests, and indeed that Mr. Heath's supporters were hardly less reluctant to accept them than his opponents.

SOMETIMES, INDEED, his programme seemed calculated to provoke bewilderment or even blank incredulity. Who can believe that today the Conservative party has become the party of the underprivileged, of the old, the sick, the impoverished, the homeless, the outcasts of the Welfare State, so that at moments one expected Mr. Heath to break into the *Internationale* (*Arise ye victims of starvation*!) and lead his army of the halt, the maim and the needy against Whitehall behind the Red banners of the New Conservatism.

Certainly one of the most interesting aspects of the election was Mr. Heath's attempt to convince the electorate, and his own party, of the virtues of the strange new brand of ideology, a combination of Manchester School economics, Shaftesbury philanthropy, and the gospel according to Hallstein and Monnet, which has emerged out of the intellectual and spiritual travail of the Conservative Central Office. One suspects that sometimes Mr. David Howell and his collaborators must stare at each other aghast as they contemplate their misbegotten offspring and wonder whether they can really persuade the Tory Party to clasp the monster to its breast.

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IN THE STRANGE TRANSVALUATION of values that has taken place in the Conservative party one thing at least has been made abundantly clear: that whatever influence the opposition now possesses will be exercised wholly in favour of Britain's entry into the Common Market. Mr. Heath's declarations on this subject have been admirably clear and unambiguous; these are hardly the words one would apply to the Government's, and nothing could have been sadder than to hear Mr. Roy Jenkins trying to convince himself that Mr. Wilson's Bristol speech was a step forward along the path which Mr. Jenkins himself would like Britain to take.

Yet Mr. Jenkins may have been right, despite Mr. Wilson's capacity for being all things to all men, to Mr. Jay as well as to Mr. Jenkins. There can be little doubt that, if he had had his own way, Mr. Wilson would not have chosen to make the Market an issue at the election, and that General de Gaulle's sudden declaration in favour of Britain's entry was as unwelcome to him as it was welcome to Mr. Heath. But Mr. Wilson is so practised a politician that one might be justified in believing that all the conditions he attaches to Britain's entry are simply

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a means of preparing the strongest possible bargaining position. And indeed if this were really so, no one perhaps would feel inclined to quarrel with them. What one fears, however, is that both the tone and the content of some Labour declarations during the election were of such a kind that, long before any negotiations have begun, they may have succeeded in persuading the most powerful members of the Community that even to begin them would be futile.

On the assumption that the new government does wish to enter Europe, it seems probable that General de Gaulle's concept of a *Europe des Etats* appeals to them more than any other; and whatever one may think of this attitude, it is at least something calculated to win the support of General de Gaulle. Moreover, it is one which reflects a certain similarity between General de Gaulle and Mr. Wilson in their feeling for history; both have now taken over their countries' past grandeur as their personal possession, only where General de Gaulle appeals to *La Gloire*, Mr. Wilson appeals to Cheap Food.

At Labour's daily press conference, an American journalist pointed out to Mr. Roy Jenkins this strangely backward-looking element in Labour's attitudes, and compared Mr. Wilson's stubborn attachment to an agricultural policy that has lasted for a hundred years with Mr. Gaitskell's refusal to turn his back on a thousand years of history. "Well, at least we've shortened the gap by 90%," said Mr. Jenkins glumly.

Yet despite such natural affinities Labour spokesmen have gone out of their way to emphasise their profound suspicion of, and hostility to, General de Gaulle, in terms indeed which make one feel that it has not yet dawned on them that the General is both a great man and the head of a friendly state. The corollary, however, to such feelings would be to find some counterweight to the France of General de Gaulle in the German Federal Republic; but here again the Labour party, and Mr. Wilson himself, have taken every opportunity to insist that they still regard the Germans as a wicked people who are not really fit to associate on equal terms with the British. Again, it does not seem to have dawned on the government that the Six, whatever their differences of opinion, do genuinely form a community, and wish to make it closer, and that any nation which seeks to join them while expressing such profound feelings of distrust, animosity, and suspicion towards their two strongest members is not likely to make a very welcome, agreeable, or cooperative addition to their number. There are moments in which one feels that the government's conception of a strong bargaining position is one in which one begins negotiations by striking one's potential partners in the face; to do anything else, it would appear, would be to crawl into the Market on our hands and knees.

R.

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A Protestant Without God

On Cesare Pavese — By STUART HOOD

NAME THREE modern Italian novelists. In this country the probable reply will be: Moravia, Silone, Lampedusa. Cesare Pavese is not likely to be one of them; yet he is certainly as good a novelist as Moravia, more interesting than Silone, and a more serious writer than Lampedusa. The reputation of an author outside his own country is determined by such factors as his translatability, his relevance to the foreign situation—including the political climate and literary fashion—and the extent to which the foreign reader can find points of reference in his writing. Moravia translates well into English, although the impact of his studiously neutral style, consciously evolved as an antidote to the Italian rhetorical tradition, which he considers politically dangerous, is lost in the process. Silone's reputation has, until recently, been greater in the English-speaking world than in Italy, because of political accident: he made his name in exile. Lampedusa was an aristocratic amateur, whose Garibaldian echoes are familiar to the English reader. Danilo Dolci —along with Giuliano—has made us conscious of Sicily. Almost the whole corpus of Pavese has been translated;[1] individually, his works have been well received; but his impact in English has not been commensurate with his range and stature.

He was born in the Piedmontese countryside at Santo Stefano Belbo—the name recurs in his novels—in 1908. His father was an official of the judiciary in Turin; his mother, widowed when Pavese was six, brought him up with Piedmontese rigour. That he was myopic may have been an accident of birth, some genetic inheritance, but that he was asthmatic seems likely to have been his mother's doing (if it be true that asthmatics are usually victims of their mothers). A lonely childhood was tempered by the freedom of the countryside and contact with the peasant children. When he writes, as he repeatedly does, of the hills among which he grew up and of the hot, damp watercourses of the Belbo, one feels a deep sense of security. The emigrant returned from America, who is the narrator of *The Moon and the Bonfires* (his last novel), speaks with Pavese's own nostalgia when he describes the country fairs and the bonfires lit on the hills to ensure the fertility of the crops. His strong sense of place, his feeling for the numinous, grew in intensity towards the end of his life: it led to a curious mysticism in which Frazer and Jung join hands. In July 1946 he wrote in his diary: "Whenever you are seized by the thrill of mythology you have in mind the tree-trunks, the river, the hill with the moon behind it, the highroad, the scent of the fields and meadows of your own country." Re-reading *The Golden Bough* he asked himself what he found in it and answered:

> That the grape, corn, the harvest and the sheaf were full of drama and to speak of them in words was to verge upon profound significances that involve our blood, the animal world, the eternal past, the unconscious mind.... It meant ancestry and childhood. Your recollection of things that puzzled you and alarmed you in the country took on a sense of uniqueness, of something unfathomable.

These are curious reflections for a Communist intellectual. The emotional charge behind them runs through his writings.

[1] The following works by Pavese, all published in England by Peter Owen, have appeared in English translation: *Among Women Only*, 1953 (Farrar, Straus, New York); *The Political Prisoner*, 1955; *The House on the Hill*, 1956 (Walker & Co., New York); *The Comrade*, 1956 (Mayflower Books, London); *This Business of Living*, 1961 (Walker & Co., New York); *The Devil in the Hills*, 1961 (Farrar, Straus, New York); *The Harvesters*, 1961; *The Beach*, 1963; *Festival Night*, 1964; *Dialogues with Leucò*, 1965. Penguins have just reissued *The Moon and the Bonfires*.

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THE SOLITUDE of his childhood was to become a permanent condition. There is a photograph of him walking alone through the streets of Turin, his coat flapping round his thin legs, his hat pulled down over his eyes. He is looking at something with that curious sidelong glance of the very short-sighted. The photograph corresponds exactly to Natalia Ginzburg's description of him in her collection of essays, *Le Piccole Virtù*. He would walk through the streets, she writes, obstinate and lonely, seeking refuge in the most out of the way, the most smoke-filled cafés, where he would sit and fill page after page with his big, hurried writing, scoring out furiously, composing poems in praise of Turin. This was where he went to school and had the strictly classical education of the *liceo*. He was a student at Turin University, taught in Turin, joined the Turin publishing house of Einaudi. He committed suicide in an hotel near the main railway station in August 1950.

He lived in the city, says Natalia Ginzburg, like an adolescent. "He was often very sad, but we thought he would be cured of that sadness when he decided to grow up; because his sadness seemed to us a boy's sadness, the melancholy of a boy moving in the arid, solitary world of dreams." It was partly the loneliness of a man who found it impossible to form a permanent relationship with a woman. The legacy of a cold, loveless childhood was carried over into adult life. His erotic fantasy was adolescent. "To live in the country with a beautiful woman—Greer Garson or Lana Turner—and lead a simple and perverse life." He could not bear the thought that people might ask something of him. He dreaded that they might "have the least right over you and make you feel it." His diary is, in part, the record of intense love affairs, usually terminated by the woman. It records the gamut of emotion from the brutality of physical jealousy—"When a woman smells of sperm and it is not mine I do not like it"—to resignation—"It is impossible not to think about women just as one does not think about death"—and the terrifying recognition of a behaviour pattern from which he cannot escape. There is a desperate note in his relationships with women, which indicates that sex was a destructive element in him. He was the kind of man for whom orgasm is a kind of little death, a sort of suicide. His last relationship was with a young American girl, who on hearing of his death remarked: "I did not know he was such a famous writer." This has been quoted as an example of cold insularity, but it is an honest comment on his inability to communicate.

SUICIDE is a recurrent theme in his diary, early stated: "I know that I am forever condemned to think of suicide when faced with no matter what difficulty or grief." His basic principle, he wrote at the age of 28, was suicide. Two of his friends had taken their lives when he was at the *liceo*; but student suicide is fairly common in Italy. Neither this nor the failure of his last love affair is sufficient to explain the mode of his death. The last entry on 18 August 1950, reads: "It seemed easy when I thought of it. Weak women have done it. It takes humility not pride. All this is sickening. Not words. An act. I won't write any more."

Perhaps what kept Pavese alive so long was a kind of stoicism learned in his Southern exile, that *domicilio coatto* out of which Carlo Levi wrote *Christ Stopped at Eboli*. The hero of *The Prison* is strongly autobiographical—a young anti-Fascist sentenced to live for months through the intolerable boredom of a small, squalid Calabrian village by the sea, without books, with no money, under constant surveillance by the *carabinieri*, assailed by the strong, suppressed sexuality of the community. By the time of his release he has learned to accept solitude, hugging it to himself, pitilessly shutting himself off from all communication. He learns that there is another political in the village inland from his own; but he refuses to meet him—not out of fear of breaking the rules of his confinement, but because he cannot bear the effort of communication. His love-making with the woman who cleans his one-roomed cottage is mute and deliberately stripped of human feeling. The only other woman with whom he has a sexual relationship is a whore imported by a syndicate of young men for a few days and kept shut up in a back-shop. When the news of his release reaches him, he receives it almost indifferently. So too, in his diary, where on 16 March 1936, there is the bald entry: "To-day my imprisonment ends." Acceptance is the theme of his most political novel, *The Comrade*, the story of a young worker from Turin who becomes involved in illegal activity. The keynote is not revolutionary optimism but sentiments like: "Things happen. It is enough if you really know what you are doing." Or: "The whole point is to hold fast and know why." Or again: "Perhaps the best thing about it (life) is that it lasts a moment and things can't be changed." His best characters are those who can survive the impulse to destroy themselves—like Clelia, the tough *modiste* from the slums of Turin who is the central figure of *Among Women Only*. The weak and innocent are corrupted and killed. The narrator of *The Moon and the Bonfires* finds that his childhood sweetheart turned informer, was shot by the partisans, and burned

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in one of the hilltop bonfires he remembers from his innocent youth. Pavese has no time for optimistic tragedies.

Between his Piedmontese birthplace and his Southern exile lay Rome, which he disliked with a deep-rooted Puritanism. "Now I realise what is so wrong with Rome. Easy friendship, taking life as it comes, money earned and spent without thought, yet everyone's standards, tastes, desires are wholly subjugated to money." This is not just the contempt of a Northern Italian for the South—the attitude expressed in its most extreme form by the saying, "Africa begins south of Florence." Looking back in 1948 to the Roman literary world before and during the war he discovered in writers like Moravia, Longanesi, Bacchelli, Cecchi, Praz, and Elsa Morante a kind of Alexandrian decadence—

> a taste for re-modelling a given style, technique, world, exercising their intelligence without becoming involved. This substantially was Fascist art; what was alive, true—and cynical—in the Fascist period. Only the extremes stayed free of it, Sicily and Piedmont, which were not Fascist ... Vittorini and Pavese. Fundamentally, humanistic intelligence—the fine arts and letters—did not suffer under Fascism; they managed to follow their own bent, cynically accepting the game as it was.

This is one of the few passages in his diary —it covers fifteen years from 1935 to 1950, during all of which he was a Communist—to show that he felt himself "committed" as a writer. Direct references to the Communist Party are rare. They are all towards the end of his life, and are of almost incredible naïvety. In January 1947 he wrote:

> There are only two attitudes to life, the Christian's and the Stoic's. Probably the Communist's is a fusion of both. He has charity and a sense of stern reality; he knows the world is hard and yet he does good.

And in June of the same year:

> A meeting of the Party has all the characteristics of a religious rite. We listen to be assured of what we already think, to be exalted by our common faith and confession.

Political consciousness comes down to togetherness—an escape from solitude. It is the attitude of an adolescent, of a very young student, perhaps. It appears that the inability to grow up, of which Natalia Ginzburg writes, applied to his political life as well as to his emotional one.

THE FACT is that he was a thoroughly unpolitical being. In 1935, when he was in exile for anti-Fascist activity, he wondered to himself what historical developments he believed in. "Revolutions perhaps? But leaving aside the fact that never has any good poetry been inspired by a revolution in action, any enthusiasm I feel about them is no more than skin deep. I can only hope that I may come across other historical values, not violently revolutionary, and exercise my imagination on them as best I can." This is literary-salon Communism of the purest kind. Pavese was himself aware of the paradox of his situation and formulated it thus in the spring of 1940:

> You are conscious of political life only at times of totalitarian crisis, and then you grow heated and run counter to your own liberalism in the hope of quickly bringing about the liberal conditions in which you may live without bothering about politics.

To live without bothering about politics is precisely what he did through the War, the Resistance, and the Liberation. In June 1940 there are passing references to the fact that Italy is now at war. "A declaration of war is like a declaration of love!" "War raises the tone of life because it organises one's personal life in accordance with a very simple pattern." When the Axis fortunes were reversed in Africa in October 1942, he entered in his diary some thoughts on Aeschylus. There is no mention of the strikes in the spring of the following year, news of which travelled through the whole of Italy and even into the prisoner-of-war camps. There is no sense of the euphoria which broke out during the extraordinary hiatus between the king's dismissal of Mussolini on 25 July 1943, and the beginning of the German occupation six weeks later on 8th September—weeks of confusion and rumour, political ferment, with great open-air meetings in Turin and Milan, which the press reported in mutilated form with great blanks on the front pages where the censors had got at the copy.

ONE OF THE FEW concrete events he records is the news that Leone Ginzburg, husband of Natalia, his old University friend, had died under torture in the Roman prison of Regina Coeli. "Do others exist for us?" he asks. "I could wish that it were not so; it would be less terrible. I am living in a sort of fog, thinking of him all the time, but vaguely. I shall end by making a habit of this state, always postponing real grief until to-morrow; so one forgets and has not suffered." For Pavese, as for many other Italian intellectuals, who were not either in hiding or active in the Resistance, the bad years of the war became a time of withdrawal, a literary and intellectual retreat. The diary becomes a kind of commonplace book, a collection

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of notes and quotations, of literary speculation, and a record of wide reading: the Elizabethan dramatists, Levy-Bruhl, commentaries on Kierkegaard, *I Fioretti* of St. Francis, Herodotus, the Greek tragedies, Giambattista Vico ("the only Italian writer with any feeling for the country way of life," which is his astonishing description of the author of the *Scienza Nuova*). What he wanted was not a day-book, a remembrancer, a chronicle of events however important, but a place where he could record the growth of his thinking as a writer, until eventually he could say of his diary:

> Things I write here are what I shall no longer talk about; they are the shavings thrown off by the plane as it shapes the day's work. Here, so to speak, is a quick way of cutting through the preliminaries, the framework, the incidental odds and ends; clearing the ground so that the main construction can be clearly seen.

He emerged from his retreat into post-war Italy where the Communists were the largest single party—no longer an underground organisation but a great mass movement pushing towards a revolutionary solution of the country's problems. This was not the Party of his student days nor of pre-war Turin, where the influence of Gramsci and his "open" Communism was still alive. The organised Marxist Party of 1945 needed names—painters, writers, intellectuals. On these intellectuals it laid certain duties and disciplines. Attendance at conferences, for instance. "Why have conferences?" asks Pavese. "Nothing of cultural value ever came out of a conference; all that one hears there, if it is to bear fruit, must still be sought in books." In 1946 he could still toe the line and challenge those intellectuals who had left the Party over the issue of individual liberty to ask themselves what they would do with this liberty they were so concerned about. Then they would see, he argued, that—"leaving apart apathy, indolence, and the hidden self-interests every man has (a life of leisure, vague thinking, and elegant forms of sadism)"—there did not exist a single instance in which their own answers would be any different from the collective one of the Party. But his writings—and it was for them the Party needed him—were an embarrassment.

Of *The Devil in the Hills*—the story of a rich young playboy, an Italian Gatsby, dying for lack of any purpose in life—it was said that neither the proletariat nor the bourgeoisie would like it. Just as in 1935 he had become politically suspect because of his attacks on the Fascist régime in the review *La Cultura*, so in 1949 his articles on contemporary literature in *Cultura e Realtà* were judged, in part at least, heretical. Controversy over the articles led to a whispering campaign: "Pavese is not a good Communist." In February 1950 he records tales of intrigue everywhere. "Shady counterplots, that could then be the talk of those nearest your heart." There was a dilemma both for the Communist Party and for Pavese. The Party needed him as a demonstration that culture is for and with the masses but could not, in the end, accept his attitudes as a novelist. He needed the Party as a point of contact with others, a place where he was accepted, where he need no longer be lonely; but he could not modify his writer's instincts even if they meant eventual exclusion. He was, as he said, caught in a political responsibility that was crushing him. To the dilemma, he wrote, there was only one answer: Suicide. The entry is dated 27 May 1950, three months before his death. His solution to the problem was typically unpolitical.

To judge by his diary, he was not—and apparently never had been—a Marxist. There is no mention anywhere of the Marxist texts and no trace of the Marxist thought-patterns. At most there is one passing quotation from Gramsci on the subject of philosophy and historicity; one reference to dialectical materialism and necessity. "But is that all there is to reality?" How remote he was from the doctrines of his chosen party is clear from an entry in January 1945 in which he looks back on the preceding year.

> A strange, rich year that began and ended with God, with much deep thought on the primitive and strange, and one which has seen some notable creative work. It could be the most important in your life so far. If you persevere with God, it certainly will be.

What he had become was a God-seeker. As early as February 1939 he was meditating on the theme of *caritas* and love for one's neighbour. Speaking, as usual, out of his isolation, he notes that the ability to differentiate oneself from others, which comes as one reaches maturity, tends to convince the ego that there is no way of communicating with others. And in fact, he goes on, there is no direct communication. One recognises the dignity of other men only through a superior being: God. That is why we are told to do good for the love of God. Contrasting the cynicism of the 'thirties with the ingenuousness of the 'twenties, he declares that both are forms of poverty, that one can without much trouble change into the other, but that a man must sweat blood to pass from either of them to true charity or, "as they say, 'find God.'" In January 1944, the year that began and ended with God, he was discussing the nature of the Kingdom of God and how

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one finds religious belief. This he defines not in terms of theology but as an emotional state of total renunciation, a losing of oneself, the sensation of letting oneself sink into a sea of love. "Perhaps everything lies in this trembling thought: 'If it were true.' If it were really true." There is a rich, symbolical reality, he goes on some days later, which can only be Christianity. To accept it means quite literally entering into the world of the supernatural. These symbols are not, however, to be confused with "the little hoard of symbols each one of us makes for himself in life." There is nothing supernatural in personal symbols, though there may be a psychological urge to transform moments of experience into moments of Absolute. This he defines as Protestantism without God (*è protestantismo senza Dio*). A Protestant without God describes him as accurately as anything else. From his Protestantism stems his concern as a writer with the problem of the individual conscience; politically he derives from it his censoriousness—as of those fellow intellectuals who indulge in leisure, vague thinking, and elegant forms of sadism!—his desire for social and moral regeneration, if necessary by totalitarian methods, his acceptance of discipline.

THE YEAR of God-seeking ends with the reflection that God may live and speak in our sub-conscious minds. If he were to review the sub-conscious elements in his diary with this thought in mind then his "toilsome search for the symbol" would perhaps be illuminated by its infinite significance. The search for the symbol was part of his preoccupation with "rites" and myths. Myths he considered to be a language, a means of expression, "not arbitrary but pregnant with symbols that, like all languages, have a special significance which can be expressed in no other way." Ritual, he held, always preceded dogma and was to be equated with life; myth and dogma corresponded to poetry and philosophy. The rite of the love-feast and the eucharist preceded the gospels and determined their form. These speculations led him to write his *Dialogues with Leucò*, a revamping of Greek myths, an unsuccessful attempt "to see familiar stories troubled into new life." In the course of his researches into primitive society he became strongly attracted to "the savage," by which he meant whatever has not yet been urbanised and tamed—ways of life, places, landscapes, human beings. While admitting the good sense of ordinary people, like the worker heroes of his early novels, he longed for something which would break out of the framework of the commonplace. By "the savage" he did not mean savagery; he did not find historical brutality—and this, he categorically stated, included tales of partisans and terrorists—interesting. It was a bold thing for an intellectual of the Left to say in 1947, when the hagiography of the Resistance was already highly developed.

Writing at the beginning of that year he summed up his position thus: "At the end of 1938 I was hard-pressed and working at full stretch; when 1946 began, I was contemptuous, rich, and rather bitter. This time it is different—I am hard-pressed and rich." What he seems to have experienced in the previous twelve months was a creative pressure—the release of what had been built up during his wartime isolation, when, as he puts it, he theorised and lived his infancy. A good deal of his theorising had been concerned with the problems of language and style, in particular with the kind of Italian he should use. At one point, in 1940, he jotted down a quotation from Foscolo which defined the difficulty. Speaking of the importance of dialects and their part in forming a national literary language, Foscolo says that the Italian of literature is "a language never spoken by anybody but always understood by everyone." The situation had not changed materially when Pavese was writing. Italy might be politically united but it was—and to some degree still is—a country linguistically divided. The movement of labour from South to North, the general mobility of modern society, is blurring the edges of regionalism, but a literal transcript of Dolci's conversations with Sicilian peasants would still require some degree of translation to an Italian of the North.

PAVESE'S PROBLEM was that the men and women of the Piedmontese countryside and of Turin used language strongly tinged with dialect. If he was to write about the people he knew best he had to reproduce their speech and yet remain intelligible to readers outside his native province. To set down their language with what he describes as "naturalistic impressionism" would cause him to be, in Foscolo's words, "very coldly received by the people of Rome, Lombardy, and the kingdom of Naples." His analysis of the situation was that dialect had grown distinct from language—whereas when Dante and Boccaccio were writing in the Florentine dialect it was also their language—and that no Italian writer could go back to dialect without being *folkloristique*. What he had to do was find a new vivacity—the kind of strength and suppleness of language he had felt in the American authors he had translated for Einaudi: Faulkner, Dos Passos, Sinclair Lewis, Sherwood Anderson. The style he hit on was not a naturalistic reproduction of how his characters would

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have spoken in reality, but a translation of their thoughts, meditations, and raillery, as if their words "had been changed into Italian by some new Pentecost." He developed the technique in *Paesi Tuoi*, the story of a peasant vendetta which has the savagery and sexuality of some of Verga. By the time he came to write his last novel—*The Moon and the Bonfires*—in the autumn of 1949 in the space of two months, almost always a chapter a day, he had developed it into a style of extreme flexibility with the cadences and vigour of spoken Italian—a truly demotic style.

The necessity to evolve this style was bound up with his use of narrators. "My stories—in so far as they succeed—are told by an onlooker who watches things greater than himself take place." In *Paesi Tuoi*, the narrator is Berto, a mechanic just released from prison, who accepts the offer to work on a farm and finds himself embroiled in a story of arson, rape, and eventually murder. As the man from the town he will walk away from it all at the end. In *The Devil in the Hills* it is a young student on the fringe of the *dolce vita* of the 'thirties, who watches a boy of his own age accept death from consumption as a release from the tedium of living. But this is merely an incident in a long vacation; he will go back to his studies. In *The House on the Hill* it is a schoolmaster evacuated to the hills above Turin; there in safety he watches the bombing of Turin, sees the first bloody beginnings of the partisan war, meets a girl, whose son may be his, and gropes painfully to understand their love affair. When the situation is too difficult, the girl arrested, the civil war too close, he withdraws to his parents' village and the valley of the Belbo. In *Among Women Only* it is a tough *modiste*, who arrives in Turin to open a new boutique, sees a young girl driven to suicide by the indifferent cruelty of her friends in the smart set; she herself is safe because she knows precisely how empty her own world is and is able to accept it. In *The Moon and the Bonfires*, it is a returned emigrant, who has bummed his way across America, and now finds himself unravelling the cruel history of the war years in his native valleys. If he cannot bear what he discovers he need not stay; he is a man without roots—he can always board a boat at Genoa.

What distinguishes all the narrators is that they are not active elements. They are catalysts. This is, in part, a reflection of Pavese's concept of character in the modern novel:

> The art of the nineteenth century was centred on the development of situations; the art of the twentieth, on static essentials. In the first, the hero was not the same at the beginning of the story as he was at the end; now he remains the same.

By this he appears to mean that our behaviour patterns, our *personae*, our personalities, are determined early and are not modified by life and experience. Life may, indeed, confirm the patterns, strengthen prejudices, establish reflexes more securely, reinforce neuroses. His politics should have persuaded him that man can be altered by the simple alteration of environment, or of economic circumstance. His deep pessimism—or his deep sense of reality—prevented him from accepting the thesis. "One must tell a story knowing that the people in it have a given character and that things will happen in accordance with predetermined laws."

Technically—apart from his stylistic achievement—Pavese was not an innovator. His attitude to the modern novel was conservative. He was impatient of the kind of art "which seems to avoid plot, simply substitutes for it an artless account of current affairs, a host of infinitesimal details about domestic incidents; instead of characters it has one character only, the average man." He found the tyranny of the slice of life equally intolerable. One could escape from it only through fantasy, which he defines as "intelligence brought to establishing relationships of analogy, of significant implication, of symbolism." Through fantasy the writer can replace reality—"which is the absence of construction"—with fairy tales, stories, and myths, which are the constructions of intelligence. From this it follows that he had a strong sense of form, of the structure and organisation of the novel. *The Moon and the Bonfires* is beautifully shaped and organised—a complex of interlocking narratives, of time schedules and symbols. Construction—a plan—he accepted not as a limitation but as something with which to wrestle creatively. To the theory that to create while actually writing is "to reach out beyond whatever plan we have made, searching, listening to the deep truth within us," he opposed his belief that often the profoundest truth we have is the plan we have created by slow, ruthless, weary effort and surrender.

Towards the end of his life, when his reputation as a writer was assured, he was asked whether he liked being famous. He answered haughtily that he had always expected it. "The fact that he had always expected it," Natalia Ginsburg comments, "meant that what he had achieved no longer gave him any pleasure; because he was incapable of enjoying

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things and loving them as soon as he possessed them. He said that he now knew his art so thoroughly it had no more secrets for him, and since it offered no more secrets no longer interested him." In his diaries there is no sign of this arrogance. Instead, there is a terrified sense of aridness. In September 1949 there is an entry which runs: "You no longer have an inner life. ... You no longer have hesitations, fears, the feeling that life is amazing. You are drying up." Some weeks later he drew up a balance sheet of his achievement. He had, he felt—although it is doubtful whether he had deliberately planned it so—covered the historical cycle of his times, from his early novels (*The Comrade* and *Before the Cock Crows*, dealing with anti-Fascism) to those of the middle period (like *The House on the Hill*, covering the Resistance) to his last work, *The Moon and the Bonfires*, which deals with the legacy of the Resistance. Looking at the corpus of his work from another angle he saw in it a progression from naturalism to symbolic reality. Symbolic reality he nowhere defines; there is a clue to its meaning, however, in a short entry ten years before, in 1939: "We want realism's wealth of experience and symbolism's depth of feeling. All art is a problem of balance between two opposites." In the group of novels beginning with *The House on the Hill* and proceeding through *Among Women Only* to *The Moon and the Bonfires* there is precisely this combination: strong, controlled emotion, compassion, and an extraordinary sense of the numinous. The landscape of his novels is not merely setting; it is a force which shapes the lives and fates of his characters.

> The characteristic thing of poetry or the myth is the consecration of individual places which are connected with a fact, an action, an event, isolating that particular spot and giving it an absolute significance. For every man the places he knew as a child come back to him consecrated in the same way: the things that took place there make them unique, mark them off from the rest of the world as being legendary. ... This is why many people shun natural realism and, instead, devise a myth, reverting to their childhood.

The term "mythical" he applied to that unmistakable central image which moves a writer most fiercely and to which he always turns. Pavese's central image is a man returning to his own environment, seeking for the roots of his existence, looking for security and finding there is none anywhere.

One can see why to the Communists he seemed a writer they could claim for their own. He had himself been a victim of political repression. He was a member of the Party. His emotions were involved on the Left, however slight his interest in doctrinal Marxism. The people he understood best—to judge from the characters of his novels—were peasants, workers, seamstresses. It is noticeable, however, that his workers are not the industrial proletariat of the great automobile works in Turin but small mechanics working on *la periferia* where town and country meet—peasants who have moved into town, not urban working-class. He had no knowledge of the assembly lines or the psychology of the factory worker. His heroes act from an impulse of humanity not from political conviction in any doctrinaire sense. At first glance, his techniques might seem to be those of Socialist Realism. There is no stream of consciousness; none of the minute analysis of psychological processes of which he was impatient. But Socialist Realism falls under the heading of "ruthless naturalism," the kind of writing in which a sentence like "It was a cold day with a little fog" can—as he says—start off pages and pages of documentary. At one point, in 1938, when he was beginning to develop as a novelist, he advanced a theory on the function of plot which comes close to the didacticism of Socialist Realism. The motive force of every plot, he stated, is simply this: to discover how a character extricates himself from a given situation, which means that every plot is invariably an exercise in optimism, in so far as it is a research into how a character responds. "There is a message in every plot: this is how one ought, or ought not to act." There is no sign from his work that he ever contrived to apply the theory.

Far from being a guide to action or even to survival one must accept life as it is. One may try to change it by political activity, but the results are likely to be unpleasant. The best thing is to take the measure of one's situation, accept it, and learn to live with it. Clelia, the heroine of *Among Women Only*, puts it paradoxically by saying "I've got everything I want." Starting from her search for the world of her childhood, which no longer exists—the world of the Turin slums where she was born but is no longer accepted—she discovers the grotesque, sordid tragedy of high society and the emptiness of her existence. Everything she wants amounts to loneliness, men who send flowers to her hotel in the hope that she may make herself available to them, women who admire her taste and scorn her for her social origins, business associates on whose whims her livelihood depends. What she has got is a strong sense of the realities of life, determination to survive. All his narrators are survivors—men and women who contrive to overcome their solitude and keep on living. They are a-social. They are entirely lacking in the optimism which should inspire the Socialist hero.

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WHAT GIVES Pavese's writing its laconic power is his own detachment, his refusal to make moral or political judgments. If *The Devil in the Hills* would please neither the proletariat nor the bourgeoisie it was because of its uncommitted honesty. For the bourgeoisie it was too accurate a picture of the destructive effect of great wealth on the young and innocent; for the politically conscious reader it was unsatisfactory because of the author's refusal to condemn Poli, the desperate, lonely playboy, who envies the animals because they know better than man how to live alone. Politically, Pavese was too honest to believe that good and evil lie wholly on one side or on the other. He knew that political action of which he in principle approved—the armed resistance to Fascism—must lead to cruelty and evil. He wrote *The House on the Hill* in 1947 when the legend of the Resistance was being politically exploited by the Left, and it required courage to state that it had an ugly, cruel side to it, that it was not an unsullied story of pure heroism on the lines of the old schoolbook story of the Little Lombard Scout, who died for the *Risorgimento* and whose body, draped in the tricolour, was saluted by the troops as they advanced to assault and victory. There is a strong vein of patriotic sentimentality in Italian literature. Pavese eschewed it. At the end of *The House on the Hill* the schoolmaster-narrator takes refuge in his native woods and hills to wait for the war and the partisan civil war to come to an end. He has been on the fringe of a Resistance group but they have all been arrested; he does not know whether they will come back alive. Sometimes he hopes they will and then he gets in a panic. Meanwhile, he has time to meditate on the dead of the civil war.

> It was seeing them that awakened me. If a stranger, a dying enemy, has this effect and one stops and is afraid to stride over his body, it means that even the enemy is still a human being, that having shed his blood we must placate it, lend it a voice, justify whoever has spilt it.... We might well ourselves be in the place of these dead and it would be no different and if we are alive we owe it to this sullied corpse. Because every war is a civil war; every man who falls resembles the one who survives and calls him to account.

In the summer of 1950 Pavese went to Rome to receive the Strega Prize—apotheosis, he called it. His resolution to live was beginning to crumble. "All these lamentations are far from stoical," he noted. Professionally he was at his peak; in his life more hopeless, more lost than ever. "I have been stoical. Was that heroism? No, I made no real effort. This is the balance-sheet of an unfinished year that I won't finish." He died in summer when his friends were away, out of town, on holiday. "He chose," says Natalia Ginzburg, "for dying a day in that scorching August and he chose a hotel room near the station because he wanted to die in the city he had made his own like a stranger."

Tench Fishers' Dawn

We are before dawn intruders,
Mesmerised by the quizzical pitch eye
Of the lake's animal presence.
It swallows our words without a ripple,
And where we crept up the grasses
Uncoil, effacing our prints. The close dark
Isolates our human stink like prey.
But when the stars melt out and dawn
Unsheathes the black acres, and the water
Pales, steaming under the risen sun,
We can see the bubbles cluster and burst.
Then, casting out, we're suddenly in touch.

Jeremy Hooker

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Take that Perique
in Three Nuns Tobacco:

First
we cut it, hang it,
separate it,
clean it, twist it,
and then place it snugly
into oak barrels.
Then we apply pressure to bathe
the leaves in their own juice.

Two weeks later
we rework it,
untwist it, air it,
then retwist it.

We do this at least three times,
often more often.

We do all these very
complicated things so that when
you put Three Nuns in your pipe and
smoke it, you'll simply enjoy it.

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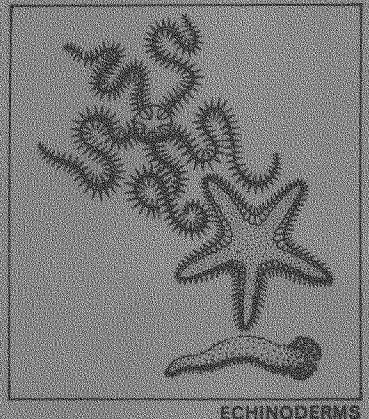

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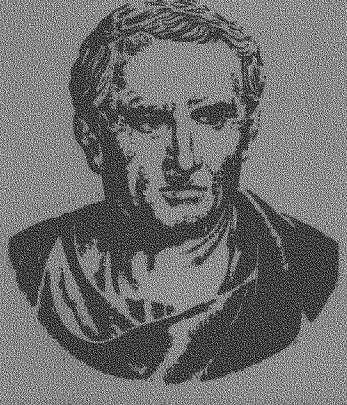

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NOTES & TOPICS

Language Levels

MR. VLADIMIR NABOKOV, who has published a four-volume translation of Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin,* is a precisian in the rich Russian language and further claims to have become a precisian in the equally rich and even more widely dispersed English language. Nobody could deny that he has a capacious English vocabulary, a good ear for dialogue and for verse cadence, besides great skill in handling long complex Ciceronian sentences so gracefully that his reader's attention seldom wanders. I therefore regret to see him quarrelling with Mr. Edmund Wilson, one of the ablest prose-writers in the United States, however gross the provocation.

Ne sutor supra crepidam judicaret, but on this occasion neither shoemaker sticks to his "last": each has invaded the other's bailiwick. My own obsessional precision appears in these inverted commas—or *commata* if Mr. Nabokov prefers the Grecian plural—around "last." "Last" is a mistranslation of *crepidam,* now wrongly governed in quotation by *ultra* "beyond," instead of *supra,* "above." The Younger Pliny's proverb, jokingly mishandled by Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet,* refers to the sewing-together of sandal-soles which, unlike shoes or boots, require no last: thus a Roman sneak-thief could steal himself a pair from the Public Baths after a mere glance at their length, without first trying them on for comfort. The proverb means, in fact, that a man whose craft is limited to sole-making should not judge the merits of anything worn above ground-level. Mr. Wilson may have a grounding in Russian, but as a sandal-maker or sandal-wearer only; and languages, like shoes, should not be treated in slip-shod fashion, that is to say, without having both the user's feet securely and comfortably housed within them.

Since, on the other hand, English is not Mr. Nabokov's mother tongue, he might well have followed Joseph Conrad's example of achieving so pure a *literary* style that it set a standard even for us carelessly speaking natives; or else have been content with Mr. Niccolo Tucci's Russo-Italian way of keeping the faint foreign flavour in his English, which amounts to a *captatio benevolentiae.* We islanders seldom trust Europeans who speak our own language without a trace of accent or who write it over-well, such as Conrad and André Maurois. I have even known an Englishman to be turned down by the Foreign Service for talking French in too Parisian a style: "Not a reliable type, my dear fellow: obviously suggestible, don't you know...." But Mr. Nabokov has much more than a grounding in English—which gives him an immense advantage in this duel with Mr. Wilson—and his one error lies in arrogating a native-born's right, first asserted by Lewis Carroll's Humpty Dumpty, to do what he likes with the language.

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less.... The question is which is to be master—that's all. They've a temper some of them—particularly verbs. *They*'re the proudest—adjectives you can do anything with, but not verbs."

Mr. Nabokov's English education has been mainly American, and taking advantage of the late Henry Ford's abrupt dismissal of history as bunk, and flouting the English tradition preserved even by Humpty Dumpty, of a uniform language level, he announces himself as an "eclectic democrat." "I do not care if a word is 'archaic' or 'dialect' or 'slang': whatever suits me, goes...."

No, pray, it does not go; or not very far. He ought to recognise that the reader's brain is a sensitive electrical receiving machine and cannot readily accept messages on more than one wave-length at a time, however high its fidelity. Hence Mr. Edmund Wilson's poor reception of Mr. Nabokov's vocabularistic diversity. I should prefer the form *ecleptic* to *eclectic*: it conveys more violence.

SOMEONE HAS JUST translated a newly discovered Hebrew text into what purports to be the language of the King James' Bible:

> O Lord, Thou showerest novel horrors over this earth, and its agonized cry rises up to Thee.

Here my black-Protestant brain boobs, unconvinced by the English. Consulting Cruden's *Concordance of the Holy Scriptures,* to verify my suspicions of the language level, I find that *shower* as a verb does not occur in the King James version, nor does *horror* as a plural, nor does *novel,* nor does *agonised*; *its* should be *her*; and *rises* should be *riseth,* to match *showerest.* My martyred hero Tyndale would have written:

> Alas, O Lord, why lettest thou this horror of darkness overspread the earth, that being in an agony we cry upon Thee and make lamentation?

How far Pushkin himself felt himself bound by the language-level convention, I cannot pre-

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tend to know: but surely an English translator of his poems should respect it? We English mix our language levels only for cosmic or satiric purposes:

> Beshrew thee, my sonsy wench, thou are a proper little bit of all right, by my blooming halidom.

is a rhetorical trope known in England as *gorblimey* (*sc.* God blind me!). The term also covers the sporting of a hat or jacket which seems out of key with the rest of one's clothes. Mr. Wilson was justified, therefore, in protesting against Pushkin's hero's alleged possession of a "girl *pal*," unless the context was altogether gorblimey. *Pal*, a 17th-century Romany word for "criminal confederate," was borrowed by mid-Victorian English public schoolboys to mean "confederate in idle pranks." Two generations later it meant "crony" or "comrade"—hence Lord Kitchener's Pals Battalions recruited for the First World War—and could be applied to a girl with whom one was on comradely rather than on erotic terms:

> *Be my pal,*
> *Dear old Sal,*
> *For you know I shall*
> *Remain your loving pal,*
> *Moreover....*

—rhyming with "the banks of the Regent's Canal." Maybe "miss" is the right word for the *Eugene Onegin* context; it certainly belongs to the correct period and exhales the required aura of "unpleasant flippancy," rather than either criminality or being a good sort. Pushkin, a contemporary of Keats, could hardly have envisaged a "pal."

Mr. Wilson objects to Mr. Nabokov's use of *loaden* which, although unimpeachably the Old English past-participle of *load* should be avoided, except in either dialect or gorblimey verse, because the 19th century used it as an affectedly poetical synonym for "loaded" or "laden."

Scrab is another ink-horn word: once used by Caxton but apart from a single airing given it by Emerson in 1890 found only in dialect contexts since before Pushkin's time. *Scrabble* has a better history, were it not for the recently invented game.

Dit, for *ditty*, was once used by Edmund Spenser, who loved obsolescent forms, but never again until Mrs. Browning whimsically picked it up. Even as a useful rhyme for *wit, tit, kit* and *cit* it (*dit*) seems hardly worth resuscitating.

Curvate is not in the *O.E.D.*, and we do not know Noah Webster's source for its use.

What distresses me most in Mr. Nabokov's defiance of Mr. Wilson, is his seemingly casual but altogether wanton invention of *youthen* as a synonym for *rejuvenate* or make *youthful*. He is violating another accepted English convention: that one may resuscitate moribund dialect words, as Mr. Nabokov does with *shippon*, anglicise French, German, Italian, Spanish or Russian words that lack exact English equivalents, or form new words from the Latin or Greek—though mule-words such as *television* and *automobile* are as a rule greeted with groans and eventually converted into "telly" and "car"—but one should not enlarge the small stock of Anglo-Saxon words by spurious coinages. We lovingly hoard, for instance, a few verbs in *-en* based on nouns—such as *hearten, frighten, threaten, strengthen*; but what is *youthen*? Neither the twelve-volume *Oxford English Dictionary*, nor the six-volume *Oxford Dialect Dictionary*, nor Noah Webster's *Dictionary*, will be found to record such a form. If Mr. Nabokov's *youthen* is to stick in the language until it *agens*, he must first plant it in a song corny enough to become a top-ten pop-hit. By the way, *top-ten* is well on the way to becoming a synonym for *outstanding* or *egregious* and will soon lose its hyphen, as *pop-hit* also will. In fact, if the word "toff" (short for "top-hat" or *tophat*) is any guide, *pophit* shortened to *poff* will mean a song that one would rather not hear more than once.

In any case, Shakespeare, though he hugely enlarged the dictionary, was content to write in *The Merchant of Venice*:

> *In such a night*
> *Medea gatherèd the inchanted hearbs*
> *That did renew old Eson*

not:

> *That youthen'd ancient Eson.*

Admittedly Keats, whom Mr. Nabokov admires, was an ecleptic democrat in his romantical refurbishing of the Classics. For example, Endymion's reaction to the Moon Goddess' unexpected embrace smells of the livery stables, rather than of Mount Latmos:

> *By the most soft completion of this face,*
> *Those lips, o slippery blisses, twinkling eyes,*
> *And by these tenderest milky sovereignties.*

We Grecians know that the true Moon Goddess's eyes gaze calmly, without a twinkle; her bright lips never drool saliva; her virgin breasts secrete no Junoesque milk. But the language level here is not democratically ecleptic; for *breasts* Keats *uses sovereignties*—rather than *tits* to rhyme with *dits*.

The same with his:

> *perhaps a careless nurse*
> *May have crump'd up a pair of Dian's legs*
> *Or warped the ivory of a Juno's brow.*

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Here again Diana is not presented as a goddess of swift-striding gait and flashing feet, but as the same good-time Hampstead girl with the pin-up face and the elegant pair of legs. I find *crump'd* for *crumpled* odious in the context—to "crump," to eat with a sound recalling that of pigs or horses. I also regret Keats' use of *"gloam"* for *"gloaming"* in *La Belle Dame sans Merci*. Keats invented *"gloam"* himself, but at least it was only a noun not a verb, and has not passed into the language; and he could offer as good a precedent for the verb *"crump"* as Mr. Nabokov can for the more useful and pleasant *rememorate*.

I admire Vladimir Nabokov, at all events for refusal to toe any line whatsoever except his own; and a slight semantic failure at the close of his tirade has left me with a most sympathetic early portrait of him as a curly-haired boy-dreamer imprisoned in a velvet-lined musical-box which played only Tchaikovsky's hideous, banal, and insulting music at him.

Robert Graves

Edith Sitwell At Home

A Partial Recall — By Tom Driberg

It is sixteen months since Edith Sitwell died. It will be many years before her status as a poet can be fairly assessed. Her *persona* was so glittering, the feuds in which she was involved were so fierce, that it is difficult to disentangle the essence of her best work from the memory of the militant human being: recent snide references have shown that some whom she snubbed are still keen to pay off old scores. But at least, as *The Times* justly observed in its long obituary (10 December 1964), "Poets as good and as different as W. B. Yeats, Mr. Robert Graves, and Mr. Roy Campbell all at different times found something to praise in her."

It is good news that her brother Osbert is undertaking a personal memoir. Meanwhile, it is sad that her "autobiography," *Taken Care Of* (Hutchinson, London, and Atheneum, New York) should be less satisfactory, as a book, than it would have been had she lived longer to amplify and revise it: her health failed seriously before it was complete, and some chapters are scrappy and padded with material already published. But no one who knew her as a friend can read it without being reminded constantly, sometimes poignantly, of her looks, voice and manner: even in some passing phrase, as when she describes an unfortunate young protégé of her grandmother's as "a born battener," one sees again that frail Gothic face nodding slowly and wisely, the almond-eyes pale-lashed, the lips that have uttered the searing words now pursed in a "Mm . . . Mm" of emphasis, then suddenly dissolving in a little choking gurgle of merriment.

Imperfect as the book is, its continuing sales show that it also meets a demand from the general public, who recognised Edith Sitwell's qualities so tardily—many being, perhaps, viewers who remember her remarkable encounter with Mr. John Freeman in his *Face to Face* series on B.B.C. television. Such was Mr. Freeman's tact and skill in drawing her out that she spoke frankly (as she does in her autobiography) of her "extremely unhappy" childhood. There was the eccentric father who hated her unconventional appearance and tried to change it by plastic surgery; there was the beautiful, silly, bullying mother ("her rages were the only reality in her life") who, when Edith was in her twenties, was trapped by crooks and convicted of fraud.

I went to the Sitwells' home, Renishaw, once while this tragic woman, Lady Ida Sitwell, was still alive, but I did not then meet her; she had decided to spend the week-end in bed "as a protest," I was told, "against Chapman's being deprived of the captaincy of England" (an event which may enable students of *Wisden* to date the occasion). This was many years after the distressing court-case, and I had not heard of it. I learned of it, by chance, from Edith herself. Despite her later efflorescence, she was essentially a shy person. We were talking of the agonies of social embarrassment that the young and shy can suffer—and she spoke of a dinner-party at which, without warning, she was introduced and seated next to an eminent judge. "I suppose they had forgotten, or didn't know," she said, "that he was the judge whom my mother had appeared before." I was myself too young and shy then to pursue further a subject so painful to her, for, till one knew her well, she inspired awe. I wish, none the less, that I had been able to do so; for on the less public side of her character there was a deep concern and pity for human suffering and deprivation of any kind—which included complete forgiveness of her mother for the suffering and deprivation that Edith had endured as a child.

This concern was not merely sentimental but

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practical; it was manifested in actual physical care for friends, such as Helen Rootham, who were chronically ill and dying, and in endless efforts on behalf of a succession of (often tiresome and ungrateful) "lame dogs." These were certainly not "the persons from Porlock" to whom her book is dedicated. Every writer who becomes known is pestered by intruders as damaging as Coleridge's; but some are more successful than Edith Sitwell was in repelling them—perhaps because she was not really so ruthless as she sometimes seemed, or because there might be the risk of quenching a genuine spark of talent (or simply because she could not forgo the fun of "putting in his place" someone who had been "impertinent").

My own friendship with her began when I was young, callow, and prone to hero-worship, especially of anybody who had enraged the bourgeois and the philistines. Her brothers, Osbert and Sacheverell, were indeed of the Left politically; but she and they also represented a sparkling challenge to the dank stuffiness of most of the artists, writers, and critics then accepted in England. This was only a few years after the first public performance of *Façade*—not then a ballet, but a reading of the poems with William Walton's music. I had begun to acquire the annual anthology, *Wheels*, while still at school. (There was a system there, fortunately open to abuse, under which books were charged to parents' accounts if a sympathetic form-master could be induced to certify that they were essential to one's studies; and my mother had never heard of *Wheels*, or indeed of Firbank, whose novels I obtained by the same ruse.) I was excited not only by the poems in *Wheels* but by the quotations at the end from (largely censorious) reviews. One of these, from the *Pall-Mall Gazette*, was so sonorous that it has always stuck in my mind; it said that the poems were "conceived in morbid eccentricity and executed in fierce factitious gloom." Morbid eccentricity, I felt, was the thing for me.

The poems in *Wheels* (not only by Edith, Osbert, and Sacheverell Sitwell but also by Aldous Huxley, Wilfred Owen, Iris Tree and others) have outlasted the *Pall-Mall Gazette*. They have also outlasted the *Morning Post*, which said, of the 1916 edition: "Fifty years hence its appearance will be remembered as a literary event, as an omen of an intellectual awakening." This is one of the very few of such prophecies which may be said to have come precisely true.

During a university vacation I had met Edith's brothers in Italy. I first met her, I think, when she came to lecture at Oxford. The earliest letter that I have from her is dated 27 January 1927. I had apparently written to ask her to tea at Rumpelmayer's, a long-vanished tea-room in St. James's Street. She accepts, and goes on to write about the articles she is contributing to the *Weekly Dispatch*:

> . . . The editor-in-chief has just returned from the South of France, in a vile temper. He *won't* have anybody under 80 mentioned, unless I say what they look like. . . . I mustn't mention Matisse, or Picasso, or Stravinsky. . . . *I* want to be allowed to write about the art of the present and the future. . . . My article for this week has been thrown out. . . .

By the end of that year I had come down from Oxford and had been trying in vain for some months to earn my living in London. Edith found out that I was working in a fairly sordid all-night café in Soho—an unremunerative job, though fascinating in a numbing, nightmarish sort of way. Since I knew that I wanted to write, but had only the vaguest idea of how to set about doing so professionally, she at once sent urgent and persuasive letters to all the editors and journalists she knew—the editor of *Vogue*, Richard Jennings of the *Daily Mirror*, Hilda Vaughan, and several others. Eventually her brother Osbert persuaded the managing editor of the *Daily Express*, Beverley Baxter, to see me—which he did after a good deal of the preliminary stalling inevitable (as I now realise) in such cases. Before being taken on, even on trial, I was to submit an article on a given subject; I think it was "London by Night." Edith wrote to me: "I need not tell you with what great anxiety I shall wait to hear the result of your article for the *Express*. You yourself can scarcely be more anxious to hear the result than I am. . . ." Such warmth of sympathy and encouragement, at such a moment, is of inestimable value and can never be forgotten. In a postscript to the same letter she apologises for its disjointedness, "but I've just smashed a tooth, and am in considerable anguish"—an emergency which many people would have made an excuse for not writing.

A few weeks later, when I had joined the *Express* on temporary trial as a reporter, she wrote: "You don't know what a happiness it is to me about you and the *Express*. I do *hope* with all my heart it will last. I don't think even you can be happier about it than I am." The intensity of care shown in such expressions was due primarily, of course, to her instinctive identification with anyone suffering distress or poverty. In this case there was another motive, too. Throughout her life Edith Sitwell showed an almost priestly devotion to the high calling of the poet, and I had at that time written verses which, rightly or wrongly, she thought promis-

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ing. In the letter she refers to a poem I had sent her: "The poem, as usual, shows this remarkable unfolding power of yours.... I have such great hopes for your future as a poet...."

In this I failed her—perhaps because I stayed with the *Express* for fifteen years.

SEVERAL of these letters contained invitations to her celebrated Saturday afternoon tea-parties. These were a kind of *salon*, but without the luxury that the word may suggest. Edith was by no means well-off. She had a small flat in Moscow Road, Bayswater, five floors up (no lift) in a tall block, Pembridge Mansions, which was destroyed during the Second World War. I remember this block of flats as singularly unprepossessing—quite different from the picturesque or "gracious" studio in Chelsea or Hampstead in which such gatherings were generally supposed to be held. Another guest, Brian Howard, said that it looked from the outside like "an inexpensive and dirty hospital." At these tea-parties there was nothing to eat but sticky halfpenny buns. Helen Rootham—who shared the flat and did the housekeeping—poured strong Indian tea from a large pot. They did not usually bother to adorn the room with flowers; these were costly, and Edith's cousin, Mrs. Frank Gilliat, says (not unkindly, for they were devoted friends) that Edith "didn't care much for flowers unless she could make a phrase of them."

In *Taken Care Of*, Edith says that she had, in her Bayswater days, "an untidy elegance like that of a tall thin bird" and that she was "a being who appeared to have but a few friends, a few snowflakes, perhaps... and a small bough of early-flowering almond-blossom."

However few her friends may have seemed, the flat was jammed, week by week, with an extraordinarily diverse collection of well-known and unknown writers and artists. There were so many of them, and they seemed to me so confident and so articulate, that I was often too dazed to memorise their names. I am ashamed to say that I don't remember meeting Edmund Gosse and Walter Sickert, whom Edith writes about in her book, though others tell me they were there. But I do remember seeing such eminents as H. G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, Aldous Huxley and T. S. Eliot. I say "seeing" because, although the younger and dimmer guests would certainly have been presented to them, it was difficult, without a brashness which I lacked, to engage them in conversation. It is still the same at parties frequented by the middle-aged and talented: unless a young person is exceptionally self-possessed and an entertaining talker, or has produced a significant work of art, or is physically attractive, he or she will have to put up with some alarming periods of solitude, until gradually, after a lot of sheer sticking-around, faint glints of recognition appear in the eyes of the elders. These tend to gravitate towards each other—partly to avoid being buttonholed by embarrassing fans with high-falutin' artistic questions, partly because they much prefer exchanging the latest information about such practical matters as royalties. So, at these parties of Edith's, I, tongue-tied, envied the gift for gay prattle of Cecil Beaton, who, young as he was, had already taken some of his brilliant photographs of her and her brothers.

Of Wells I recall nothing except that he was there and was voluble. Of Bennett I recall one incident. On an occasion when the room was less crowded than usual, Edith and half a dozen of her guests were sitting in a circle, listening to Bennett. He had a stammer which was intermittent rather than chronic: it came on when you were least expecting it and would delay for some time the delivery of the one word necessary to complete a sentence. Thus now, speaking of a writer whom most of us knew and liked, he said: "What Siegfried needs is a... is a m-" (long and agonising pause, accompanied by a pounding of Bennett's right foot on the floor) "a m-m-m-*mistress*."

Huxley was a good deal younger than these, but was already an idol of mine, for I had read *Antic Hay* and *Crome Yellow*. He was very tall and graceful, myopic and a little stooping, gracious yet distant. I did not really get to know him until many years later, at his home in California.

It was even more difficult, in these surroundings, to talk to Eliot, for whom I had a special veneration: we had only quite recently digested *The Waste Land*. (Auden had not heard of it when I showed it to him in the first number of *The Criterion*.) By contrast with some of the other eminents, whom one could not talk to because one could not get a word in edgeways, one could not talk much to Eliot because his shyness matched one's own. What he did say was not dull; but his taciturnity or diffidence was extreme. Edith used to say that a typical Eliot conversational opening would run: "I rather—hesitate—to suggest...."

GERTRUDE STEIN was there when she came to England: massively commonsensical, like a reliable *hausfrau*, in brown boots and black woollen stockings. There were usually people from the Ballet, especially when there was a Diaghilev season; and a great expert on more primitive dancing, Beryl de Zoete, with Arthur Waley, that gentle scholar whose knowledge of Japanese is so profound that he was able both to translate *The Tale of Genji* and, as a war-

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time censor of Japanese correspondents' cables, to unmask a transmitter of secret information. Alan Searle brought Maugham at least once; and once, too, Mrs. Patrick Campbell sailed in. She may have sensed in her hostess, younger though she was, a majesty that even her imperious presence could not outshine: at any rate, she told her friends afterwards how sorry she was that Edith had to live in such horrifying squalor, and sent her a dozen silver tea-spoons. (There were never enough of these to go round.)

One who became more than a passing acquaintance was Constant Lambert, an ebullient narrator of the absurd happenings of which he seemed daily to be the centre and victim. Once, as Edith records, he saw Lytton Strachey at a party, went up to him, and said (and it is, admittedly, an annoying thing to have said to one): "You don't remember, Mr. Strachey? We met four years ago." "Quite a nice interval, I think, don't you?" said Strachey, and passed on. (This recalls an experience, also recounted by Edith, of another young writer whom she helped and encouraged, Denton Welch. He described in *Horizon* a visit to Walter Sickert, during which Sickert behaved in a fairly eccentric way: as Welch was leaving, Sickert said to him: "Come again, when you have a little less time.")

Lambert was always getting unwittingly involved in cross-purpose dialogue. Once, after a long and tiring journey, he arrived to stay at a friend's house. In the room, when he was shown in, was another guest, a girl. The radio was on. "Ah, here you are," said the host. "How are you?" "A little *piano*," said Lambert. "No," said his host, "it's a new wireless set." But the girl said, "If you mean that stuff like cough-mixture they give you in France, it always gives me a headache."

Of the older women whom one met at Pembridge Mansions, the most enthralling was "the Sphinx"—Mrs. Ada Leverson, the novelist, who befriended Oscar Wilde when he came out of jail: deaf, but smiling and nodding with the constant pretence of understanding which the deaf so often, pathetically, offer as a substitute for full participation; small, dressed in black, her head surmounted by an orange-gold wig and a tulle-swathed black hat (which, Osbert used to say, was attached to the wig so that she could never take the hat off till she went to bed). When I first met her, at Rapallo, she took me to see Max Beerbohm in his roof-top study: as children, in the 1880s, they had been to dancing-class together. She contributed to *The Criterion* a moving account of "the last first-night." The play was *The Importance of Being Earnest*; the author, in a box with the Sphinx and her husband, was as flamboyantly delightful as ever but restless and troubled by forebodings of the doom that soon overtook him.

THERE MUST have been, in all, hundreds of guests at the many sessions of this *salon*. I do not think that any other party of that time —certainly none so austere in its gastronomic provision, and none of the far more splendid parties given by the great "lion-hunting" hostesses of the day, Lady Cunard and Lady Colefax —attracted so comprehensive an array of genius and talent. Such an account as this, based as it is on memories of thirty-five years ago—not, alas, on diaries—must suffer from two contrary defects: it is incomplete, yet it reads like an exercise in name-dropping. Let me drop, with briefer comment or none, a few more of the names that enhanced the richness of the company in that small Bayswater flat: Lord Berners, wit, composer, painter, who went there when he and Sacheverell Sitwell were doing a ballet for Diaghilev; another devotee and patron of the Ballet, Lady Juliet Duff; John Hayward in his invalid-chair; Roy Campbell, whose poetry stirred Edith more than any poetry she had then seen; Stephen Spender, soaring above the smoke and the babel like an innocent pink crane; Rosamond and John Lehmann; Tchelitchew, who did some of the best portraits of Edith and was one of her devoted friends and *protégés*; Raymond Mortimer; Cyril Connolly; Harold Acton, not long down from Oxford but already a published poet, stately, benign, and with an aura of European learning and sophistication; Joan Haslip, then an enthusiastic blushing girl with a jolly face and a few hairs astray, later to become a distinguished biographer; Bryher, rarely emerging from seclusion but a beloved and admired friend of Edith, as she was always to remain; and—I think but cannot be sure—Maurice Bowra and Graham Greene.

This *salon* was an institution that lasted for some years. Edith records that she first went to live in Pembridge Mansions early in the 1914 war, when she was working at the Pensions Office for 27s. a week. Probably the tea-parties began in the early '20s; I first went to one in the winter of 1927. Geoffrey Gorer, who was there a year or two earlier, tells me of two guests whose behaviour I should dearly have liked to observe.

One was W. B. Yeats. Great poet as he was, he also talked a good deal of nonsense about the occult; he had for a time been under the influence of Aleister Crowley. At one of Edith's parties he performed a magical ceremony supposed to evoke the scent of roses. The company waited tensely; the mumbo-jumbo went on; but nothing happened, there wasn't the ghost of a rose.

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The other guest—far more incongruous—was Dr. Frank Buchman, founder of Moral Re-Armament, then in its early days as the Oxford Group. Gorer teased Buchman a good deal and, after Gorer had left, Buchman insisted that his hostess should join him in prayer for Gorer's conversion and in seeking divine guidance on the best means of bringing this about. Edith said afterwards that she disliked being forced to her knees and also disliked Buchman's handshake, which she found clammy.

Who can have been so inept as to bring Buchman to Edith's flat? Gorer thinks it was "a young Scotsman." Whoever it was, it is unlikely that he was asked again. These parties were, as I have said, comprehensive; but they were not all-inclusive, and the flat was not "open house." Indeed, to take a friend with one was sometimes to take a slight risk: Edith would welcome the friend kindly, but if he or she made unsuitable remarks, such as a word in favour of one of the public persons with whom our hostess was (as throughout her life) engaged in battle, one realised quickly that it would have been much better to have left that friend at home. Of one man (not introduced by me) who had proved unworthy of her hospitality, she wrote to me on December 14th, 1931: "The person who made all that infernal mischief... is never going to be allowed here again. He came, as it was, unwanted and uninvited. There is one gleam of brightness to be seen... and that is: I shall never be forced to read those awful verses of his again!"

MUCH LATER I came to regret some of Edith's public feuds. When young, I sided with her passionately, in happy and loyal ignorance, found her wit devastating (which it often was), and assumed that her opponents had been finally and justly flattened. I always remained faithful to her friendship, but in due course I met people of, apparently, sound judgment and decent manners and was startled to find that they had a high opinion of, for instance, the arch-enemy —Dr. Leavis himself. I was told that he, like Edith, had specialised in the study of texture in poetry; and I thought it a pity that, if actual collaboration between two such richly endowed but temperamentally antipathetic people was impossible, they could not have engaged in fruitful dialogue or at least stopped slanging each other. But then, I don't know how this feud began, or what *bêtise* or "impertinence" Dr. Leavis had been guilty of. I do know that Edith attributed the rough treatment that she sometimes had from the *New Statesman* to the "fact" (for so her belief was) that its staff was "swarming with Leavisites." Here, however, the television interview with John Freeman, then editor of the *NS*, helped to heal an old wound; for she was pleased with his interviewing technique, liked him personally, and remained friendly with him till her death.

He, indeed, was one of her last visitors, only about a week before the end. He tells me that he found her in bed in her Hampstead home, wearing a peacock-green satin bed-jacket and some of her magnificent rings. Facing her on the opposite wall was one of Tchelitchew's portraits of her, one that she had long lost track of: her secretary, Elizabeth Salter, had found it in Paris and given it to her. A Siamese cat was stalking crossly over the bed. She was weak and ill, but her talk, till she tired, was lively and vigorous. She was not going to die just yet, she said. The priest had been in, hoping to hear her last Confession, but—"I routed him." This priest was an admirable man and a skilled confessor but, in appearance, painfully lean and hungry-looking. When he had been sitting by her bed, she said, her eyes had been closed: she had simply pretended to be asleep because she had not felt like pious conversation. But she did open one eye—and saw the priest surreptitiously helping himself to the cat's biscuits.

Letters © Edith Sitwell Estate 1966

Africa Without Tears

"THE NEWS of the political murders in Nigeria comes as a deep shock," said Dame Margery Perham, that valiant champion of African independence, in a broadcast talk shortly after the January uprising there. She concluded in sorrowful and moving tones:

> I cannot end this talk without expressing the hope that people here, and especially the generous young, will not lose faith in independent Africa or in Britain's work in helping to create that independence.

Many of us who have also worked for African independence, who have shared the faith that independent Africa would comprise far happier and healthier societies than subject Africa ever could, were equally shocked by the murders in Nigeria. What has happened since in Ghana brought no distress, only relief. But Nigeria!—the largest and most hopeful (so we thought) of the ex-British colonies on the continent, democracy's one remaining hope in Africa....

Nigeria was of course not the first—nor the last—of the shocks; recently they have been coming thick and fast. In February we had the

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upheaval in Ghana and the dethronement of Dr. Nkrumah, a different kind of shock it is true, because the Nkrumah régime was generally known to be thoroughly rotten and we could rejoice that the Ghanaians had been able to overthrow a tyrant. But even there how can we be confident that a stable democracy will now be able to flourish? At the moment the whole political future of Africa seems dark and dubious, yet our hearts continue to echo Margery Perham's plea: no, we must not "lose faith." This affirmation comes automatically; it springs from all we had worked for, hoped for in Africa. And—what is most difficult of all to grasp—it is just because of this emotional response, because of the need we feel to declare in trembling voices that we still have faith in Africa, that the troubles between ourselves and the Africans arise.

Take a look back twenty-five years. It was just about then that the first intensive pressure-groups were formed in Britain to work for African freedom. The struggle for "justice for Africans" of course dates back much earlier, at least to the days of the slave trade. But during the war years of the 1940s a new breeze began to blow. Economic development and welfare, the spread of education, the establishment of institutions such as trade unions and co-operatives, the movement towards democratic constitutions—these and a hundred other reforms were recognised as essential. But the true goal towards which all this effort was directed was the great day when the African colonies would cease to suffer the humiliation of being "Colonies" and achieve the status of "Independence." We came to understand that nothing short of independence—no well-meaning "trusteeship," no amount of good works—could substitute for a people's right to shape its own destiny.

I was very involved with one of these pressure groups—the Fabian Colonial Bureau—all through the 'forties. We worked in contact with many of the men who have since climbed to the top in Africa, but who were then students in England or visitors on special missions. I can remember Kwame Nkrumah, Hastings Banda, Zik, Jomo Kenyatta, Joseph Murumbi, Albert Margai, Samuel Akintola (now murdered), Obafemi Awolowo (now in prison), H. O. Davies, Robert Gardiner, Kofi Busia (now in exile), in our offices or on our platforms. Their own nationalist movements were taking shape. We wanted for Africa what we had ourselves—even down to every detail of Westminster constitutions—and they wanted the same. We were prepared to fight for them in parliament, through deputations to ministers, through the press, through every possible appeal to public opinion, to secure redress of specific grievances—and there were always plenty of these. But we never ceased to assert their right to independence, while they, on their part, were beginning to organise their own movements the more forcefully to assert their own claim. During this honeymoon period, in fact, British idealism and African nationalism walked hand in hand.

Success came more quickly and more thoroughly than anyone had anticipated. The War certainly had something to do with it—it churned up the public conscience in all sorts of ways, not least on the problem of imperialism. And it brought Africans into the army and on to far-flung battlefields, with all the new impressions and ideas which flow from these experiences. In 1957 the Gold Coast—transformed into Ghana—was the first to become fully sovereign and independent; today, not ten years later, practically the whole of Africa, with a few notorious exceptions, has followed suit.

But once nationalism had achieved its immediate object and the rights of all people to "self-determination" had been recognised, the whole situation changed. The honeymoon ended. Instead of being noble freedom-fighters supported by the sympathy of all liberal-minded people abroad, they had at once to become politicians and administrators, caught up in a new power struggle which is an inevitable part of politics. And once they became politicians and administrators, they were open to all the seductions of power—intrigue, corruption, bribery, even thuggery. Their links with their erstwhile supporters abroad loosened; in any case, and quite naturally, their urge was to cast aside all ties springing from the hated colonial past. On both sides a new reserve developed.

From some points of view it might be said that the history of ten years and less of African independence has been disastrous. Doubtless independence had to come when it did, but its consequences have at times been intensely disagreeable. Although during the freedom struggle every African politician in British colonies called for nothing less than a "Westminster-type" parliamentary democracy for his own country, once independence came, territory after territory moved quickly towards the abolition of a legal opposition and enthroned the idea of the one-party state as something peculiarly adapted to the African genius. Opposition leaders have been imprisoned, sometimes killed; free trade unions have been suppressed and their leaders, again, imprisoned; there have been some assassinations of presidents, some military *putsches*, some army mutinies, some scandalous cases of corruption, some flagrant

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violations of the rule of law, many infringements of free speech and freedom of the press. We have seen all these unpleasant phenomena in one or another part of Africa in a very short space of time.

The new African states had, it is true, some severe difficulties to contend with. Most of them were not really prepared for independence; emotionally prepared, yes, but not administratively prepared. There were too few persons of skill, too little experience in government and certainly too few resources. But no allowances were made for their weakness and backwardness. Of course they were "backward"—how could it have been otherwise?—even though we are not supposed to use the word. In previous centuries, when empires disintegrated and subject races assumed their own sovereignty, they had a chance to pull themselves together quietly: gradually to learn the arts of government and diplomacy. It is very different in the twentieth century. A new nation is pitchforked on to the world stage at once, given its seat in the United Nations, called upon to vote on every issue under the sun. The strain on its resources—both of manpower and of modesty—are immense; and the sweets of office unbearably alluring for men from so deprived a background.

Not only that, but the African states came into being at the height of the cold war. The concept of extending economic aid to the less developed part of the world had begun to take root during the war years; it was transformed into a political strategy once these states became independent. The Western world on the one hand and the Communists on the other vied with each other in offering money, technical experts, steel mills, tractors to the "uncommitted" nations, either to win their allegiance, or at least to ensure that they remained uncommitted. From being "nobodies" the African leaders became the objects of flattering, competitive courtships. If the United States failed to give them what they asked, sure enough the Soviet Union would provide what was necessary. And there were also the West Germans, the East Germans, the Czechs, the French, the British, the Chinese, and the rest, all playing the aid game, with varying degrees of sincerity.

All this flattery, and all these disasters! No wonder there has now been a revulsion of feeling in Britain—and in other Western countries—against Africa. Did we not delude ourselves into thinking that Africans could stand on their own feet and play their own part in the modern world? Is all this talk about "African democracy," "African socialism," an "African personality" anything more than clap-trap—fancy names for despotism at the centre and tribalism at the periphery? Are we not still dealing with primitive people who cannot be judged by the standards we set for ourselves? Or is it still "our fault"—that we fail to understand Africa, that we are crassly lacking in knowledge and empathy?

How to see Africa in perspective? I am convinced that the first necessity is to rid ourselves of emotionalism on the subject. We in Britain are extraordinarily neurotic about Africa. We cannot rid ourselves of our guilt complex. We heard so much of our misdeeds as imperial masters. We thought ourselves the wickedest people on earth and Africans were (as one African wrote to me at the time) "suppressed, depressed, oppressed, repressed"—not to mention (yesterday's favourite word!) "exploited." I can remember public meetings with a positively masochistic undertone, where the more one berated the evils of British rule to a British audience, the louder the cheers, the greater the enthusiasm of excited British audiences.

But here we are so illogical. Although, on the one hand, we see the Africans are poor, backward, uneducated as a result of our past misdeeds (and even our present misdeeds, according to those who believe in "neo-colonialism"), we still expect them to be fine, upright citizens, capable of running a stable parliamentary democracy, intent on withstanding corruption, possessing mature political standards. *Our* justification lies in their being all these things. Did *we* not work for them for a long time? Did *we* not —remember Margery Perham's words—"help to create their independence"? When they fail, it means that *we—our* life work, all *we* have fought for—has failed too. We beat our breasts in despair. If we lose faith in independent Africa, we lose faith in ourselves.

We are sensitive about Africa not only because of these complicated emotions springing from our colonial past—its bad and its good—but because of our present uncertainties, not least the uncertainties regarding the Commonwealth. Having lost an empire, of which many of us were ashamed, our diminishing prestige was compensated by the flowering of a Commonwealth, of which we were proud. It was a unique association of sister nations, free and equal, but encompassing all races, all colours, all continents. After all, Britain, as the centre of this widespread Commonwealth, would remain a great, influential power.

Yet, in the past few years, the future of the Commonwealth has been clouded with doubt, mainly owing to the restiveness of the African

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members, caught in an association which still carries with it the aura of their colonial past. It is as much as the career of an African leader is worth to be thought "moderate"; and to be *too friendly with Britain, or "too Commonwealth,"* is a certain sign of "moderation." So African leaders enjoy threatening to walk out. At the moment some have broken off diplomatic relations with Britain over the Rhodesian affair; they are as abusive of Britain as they can be. In such an atmosphere—and with loosening trade bonds—even we in Britain are coming increasingly to think of the Commonwealth as a "gigantic farce" (the words of one dissident Tory), or at least as an insubstantial illusion. If in the end Africa withdraws, Britain must look to a very different—and less influential—future.

Thus Africa threatens our sense of security; no wonder events there provoke us into excess. This emotionalism takes yet another form. Those of us who care about Africa have difficulty in seeing Africans as people like ourselves, with the same human virtues and vices, the same capacity for suffering, the same prey to the seductions of wealth and power. We set standards for them different from our own. When they fall short of what we would consider right, we rationalise their shortcomings away. If their governments show scant concern for any form of liberty (except national sovereignty), we tell ourselves—and them—that freedom doesn't matter to them in the same way as to us (for they have never experienced it in the way we have). If they turn to dictatorial political systems and confine the political opposition in dungeons, we say that, after all, economic development is so much more important to them and blithely assert that economic development and political freedom go ill together. Or, we say, their politicians are "corrupt" only according to our interpretation of what corruption means, but not necessarily according to theirs (for in Africa corruption is, as often as not, applauded). And anyway, as politicians are corrupt, how futile to want democratic institutions: would not a strong president or even a military dictatorship suit Africa better...? So the arguments and rationalisations proceed. From how many distinguished African experts, progressive politicians, knowledgeable journalists have we heard these apologias over recent years. Even today they will find excuses for Nkrumah's tyranny. Look at all the benefits he brought to Ghana! He probably even made the trains run on time.

THE ONE THING we cannot, apparently, do is to see Africa straight. We are either twisting ourselves into knots in order to condone what we should never condone elsewhere, or else we are being "shocked" to the core by events which would hardly make us bat an eyelid if they occurred in comparable countries in other parts of the world. Margery Perham—and many of us—were shocked by the murders in Nigeria; political murders continually occur in other places and leave us unmoved.

We cannot accept that Africans are no better and no worse than anyone else, given the same circumstances. They are corrupt: so were we until quite recently in our history. They do not possess those maturer political qualities which would enable them to run a successful Parliamentary democracy: neither, apparently, do East Europeans or Latin Americans, where democratic régimes have been tried and almost always failed. For all the complicated reasons I have described, Africa remains always for us a special case—a case in which our own pride, own guilt, our hopes, our fears, continue to be involved.

AFRICANS, too, have come to regard themselves as a special case. They have convinced themselves that there is some kind of special personality which can be called the "African personality"; some special kind of democracy called "African democracy"; and some special kind of socialism called "African socialism." Most students of Africa find it impossible to pin-point exactly what these unique phenomena are. In a learned collection of essays on "African socialism" the editors have this to say in their introduction:

> African socialism must be seen in its proper context as an attempt to find an ideology that will satisfy the often divergent needs of the times. ... At first the ideology tends to be a highly flexible, amorphous set of ideas that fails to meet the criteria of sophisticated thinking.... The many tendencies that exist today in African socialism make it appear as a potpourri of ideas having little coherence.[1]

Similarly, African democracy is the particular political system which happens to satisfy the needs of a particular leader for fulfilling the particular ideas he has in mind at a particular time. Thus what appears to us to be the dictatorship of a single party in the state is, we are told, "African democracy." (With not dissimilar verbal dexterity the totalitarian régimes of Communist countries dignify themselves with the name of "people's democracies.")

I do not want to suggest that it is impossible for Africans to develop institutions of their own.

[1] *African Socialism*, edited by William H. Friedland and Karl G. Rosberg. Oxford University Press, 1965.

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Indeed, it is easy to be impressed—though I must confess to entertaining lurking doubts—by what Julius Nyerere of Tanzania is accomplishing in his one-party state which yet encourages freedom of discussion and allows alternative candidates (although of the same party) to contest elections. Africans certainly have a great inner need to prove their creativeness to the world, to prove their independence in every way—even in the ideological—from their old colonial masters.

But the basic fact remains that political or economic systems do not embrace an infinite variety. It is all a matter of how political power is controlled: by a monarch, by a class, by a despot, by the people; the alternatives are remarkably limited. And if tyranny is to be avoided, power must be divided; the rulers must be subject to controls and to effective criticism, simply because no man can be trusted to exercise uncontrolled power and not become a tyrant. A rare individual (Nyerere?) may prove to be worthy of such a trust, but it would be highly dangerous to expect such things from his successors. What will happen to Tanzanian democracy when he goes? For *all* rulers in *all* societies are open to the temptations of power, and the chances are that they will succumb to them, human nature being everywhere what it is, unless they are made subject to controls of one kind or another. That is why I am sceptical when I hear one-party states described as "democracies" (African or otherwise); they are far more likely to be dictatorships, and why, after all, should we, when dealing with Africa, not call a spade a spade?

I COME BACK, then, to what seems so very difficult for all of us—ex-colonial administrators, politicians, missionaries, teachers, students, writers—who worked with and for Africans, who thought of ourselves as their friends. I refer to the need now to cast off the irrational, at times contradictory, emotions which spring from that past association. Let us not be any more shocked and grieved by what Africans do than by what anyone else does. Let us not, when they act badly, feel so disappointed that, to comfort ourselves, we feel a positive maternal need to declare our faith in them, any more than we declare faith in Arabs, Asians, or South Sea Islanders after they have toppled a government in a bout of bloodshed.

More than that. Let us not condone their misdeeds any more than we condone our own. One must, of course, always try to understand how another people's particular background may lead them to act in strange ways. But if we are to live together in the same world (in a Commonwealth, United Nations, or—who knows?—eventually in a World Government), we must in the end forge *some* common code of conduct and share, more or less, the same common scale of values. But, you might say, African societies are still primitive societies, and they are bound to have different values and standards from our sophisticated ones. There is nothing more calculated to antagonise Africans than that argument. They do not want their societies to be considered "primitive." They do want to join us on common ground. They must, therefore, submit to the same criteria by which we are all judged.

As long as we continue to regard Africans as a "special case" to be courted, flattered, excused, expected-greater-things-from, grieved-over, explained-away, we will still not have recognised that they have, once and for all, severed the navel cord which used to bind us. And Africans will continue to regard us with that irritation—merging eventually into pity—which marks the attitude of grown-up children to their anxious, ridiculous parents.

Rita Hinden

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Edmund Wilson's Achievement

By Frank Kermode

> And this bwings us to liquorary quiddicism. What a wonderful is liquorary quiddicism! What fastiddily! what intellectual breath! what unreproachable stammards and crytearia! what inside and painentralia!
>
> THE THREE LIMPERARY CRIPPLES (1930)

AND IT RAISES the question why Edmund Wilson should be thought to be, as in my view he is, so pre-eminently the greatest periodical critic of his time, at any rate in English. The younger Americans have of late been showing some disappointment with him, finding him cranky and unwilling to deal with *their* new things as he had dealt with his own. We have no special reason to like him, as the English are a source of annoyance and disappointment to him and he has often said so. He once began a review thus: "Mr. E. H. Carr is an odd phenomenon—perhaps a symptom of the decay of Great Britain." Nor does this remark, which —leaving aside the justice of the diagnosis— could only have been made by a very difficult and occasionally somewhat ludicrous critic, stand alone. Needing to make it clear that despite his admiration for Marx and Engels he loathes the Dialectic, he tosses off the proposal that the Hegelian triad, like the triangle of Pythagoras, the Christian Trinity and the Wotan-Brunnhilde-Siegfried set, were symbols of the male sexual organs (*To the Finland Station*, II, 11). This is an emotional way of saying that he finds the Dialectic and the Trinity extremely unreasonable, and lest argument should fail to establish this he throws in a tremendous symbol of irrationality. Much too often, I think, he uses Freudian explanations in a similar way: *The Wound and the Bow* is on re-reading his least interesting (though still memorable) book partly because the theory ends the argument prematurely, and the essay on Ben Jonson in *The Triple Thinkers*, for all its richness of reference and structural power, is so busy with the thesis of Jonson's anal eroticism that it neglects to examine his works. *Texture* is important in Jonson, and its examination is not one of Wilson's strong points. I am not saying the thesis is wrong, or even that it is irrelevant, but only that it obtrudes itself, as E. M. Forster once said mysticism might, "at the wrong stage of the affair."

This only begins the tale of Edmund Wilson's deficiencies, and we might as well mention one more which has a bearing on his view of the English: this is simply that he is so *echt* American that it shows in some ways which may strike us as inappropriate. Red Bank, Princeton, houses, friends, heroes such as H. L. Mencken and John Jay Chapman, they all become part of a patrician mythology rather like Yeats', and sometimes Wilson seems to feel a need to Americanise before he can offer sympathetic understanding. An essay on Dostoevsky makes the point that when the Russian is writing on Russian exiles "a good deal of what he says applies equally to expatriate Americans in Europe." Fair enough; but two pages later we read this: "Dostoevsky's instinct was sound: the fact that the American problem seems a particularly formidable one is no cause for fleeing or evading it." In the same way we feel an unexpected sympathy with Lenin's red hair and Marx's boils and certain Russian country houses. The Jews are translated into New Englanders. Going to America made Auden a good poet; leaving it made Eliot a sort of cultured Uriah Heep. Finally, *Patriotic Gore*, for all its virtues, obviously indulges a nostalgic, bitter Americanism; so does *The Cold War and the Income Tax*.

GOOD REVIEWING in the weeklies and monthlies is, as Wilson himself very well knows, an essential element in the hygiene of a literary culture; yet he has done it more or less under protest over a long period of his life; and this from vanity rather than laziness, for he is apparently a tireless reader and writes (judging from the bulk of his work, and the ease with which it is

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articulated) with as much facility as any one, though this is a quality that casual readers are very apt to exaggerate. It is not surprising, therefore, that his critics notice a decline in the interest and penetration of his journalism between the work of the twenties and thirties collected in *The Shores of Light* and that of the forties collected in *Classics and Commercials*.[1] No doubt a further decline may be found in the new collection from later years, which is called—as if to emphasise a certain inconsiderate isolation, a galloping off in directions that interest only him—*The Bit Between my Teeth*.[2] If the best journalism belongs to the twenties and the best criticism of the more formal kind is in *Axel's Castle* (1931), there is some justification for the view of some commentators that this formidable figure has—for reasons only to be guessed at, though often related to the politics of the thirties—grown less and less useful over the last thirty-five years. And we can at least be sure that Wilson himself unreservedly accepts the criterion of utility in matters of criticism, as in literature itself. Broadly speaking, this is the way Norman Podhoretz talks about Wilson in what is probably the best essay about him. "From now on," Podhoretz says at the end of his piece, "we shall have to look elsewhere for the kind of guidance that it was his particular glory to give."

It is not difficult to understand Podhoretz's disappointment. A man who had clearly seen, and tirelessly propagated, the right programme for American letters—who had, with serious optimism, insisted upon their relevance to the health of American society—seems to have contracted out, calling himself an alien in his own country, constructing a misanthrope's *Vision*. All that patrician generosity, all that subtle meditation on social justice, was converted into the gloomy execrations of un-American self-exile; like Shakespeare's Poet visiting Timon in the woods, the dependent critic is rewarded with curses and gold thrown in his face. This is how it must seem to the leaderless.

THIS IS of course primarily an American problem, and it is interesting to notice that a new book on Wilson tackles it quite differently. Mr. Sherman Paul[3] has, in fact, written a very elaborate study of the large and varied *oeuvre* with the intention not of demonstrating Wilson's cultural usefulness but of tracing in it the lines of an important writer's personal development. This strategy has its drawbacks, the worst of which is that it gets Wilson's public achievement out of focus; Paul attends just as closely to writings of small public importance as to the major works, and even the criticism is treated as if it were *à clef*. There are other disadvantages. Nobody can write about Wilson without inviting hostile comparisons between his prose and that of his subject. It would have been tactful of Mr. Paul to avoid usages formally condemned by his hero, such as *demean* in the sense of "disparage" or "abase," which occurs twice in the book.

All the same, this is a valuable study. From the opening chapter on the critic's youth one gets a perfectly valid slogan: Wilson is finely Puritan, if the word can mean "concerned with moral precision." The dominant virtue of the intellectual is a demythologised charity, and if Wilson has often lapsed from this, both by mythologising and by uncharitable behaviour, who among critics working under such pressures has been more faithful? Certainly not Taine, his earliest model, who "shrank . . . into professorial superiority" when progress came to be associated with vulgar revolution: "a remote disapproval chills his tone, all the bright colours of his fancy go dead." Again and again Wilson finds in the career of distinguished writers a similar shrinking: in Eliot, for example, and all the neo-Christians (as Mr. Empson calls them), in Anatole France and Bernard Shaw. But even in the days when the rightness of the Marxist diagnosis seemed most dreadfully confirmed by the condition of America, Wilson wanted Marxism without the mythology, wanted people to prove their charitable faith by good works rather than by an abdication of the reason. Whatever the mistakes, he did seek to carry out the Jamesian programme of "striving to understand everything" about human relations in a world not in itself organised for humanity, and discovering what might be for humanity "indubitable values." Even now it is not the values that have changed, but society that has turned out to be less corrigible than he hoped.

In the early days of his career, at Princeton and in Greenwich Village, the constant pursuit of abstract civil virtue and *il ben del intelletto* seem to have set him a little apart even from his brilliant contemporaries. Part of the difficulty was doubtless that for all his excitement at an American renaissance, his superior understanding of the modern, Wilson was always a man for continuity. He remained devoted to his Princeton teacher Christian Gauss, who believed that man and his environment were one, and that he could in some measure master it; criticism would ideally be an aid to this, "a history

[1] Both collections are now reissued by W. H. Allen at 42s. and 35s.
[2] W. H. Allen, 42s.
[3] *Edmund Wilson: A Study of Literary Vocation in Our Time* (University of Illinois Press, $5·75 and 42s.)

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of man's ideas and imaginings in the setting of conditions which have shaped them." *Axel's Castle*, which acts upon this belief, is dedicated to Gauss; and it is not merely an exceptionally intelligent and original piece of literary history but an attempt to improve the possibility of literature becoming an agent of human mastery over the modern environment. For Wilson literature is always a way of knowing the world, and however much one may say of it as a giver of pleasure it is measured finally by its utility. It will not be useful unless it is fully informed, and neither the writing nor the exposition of imaginative works can, in his view, be worth much unless the author or the expositor has a deep familiarity with his subject and the knowledge to provide broad context. That is why his own programme has involved the mastery of many languages and literatures, and why he despises monolingual and one-subject professors. It is also the reason for his commitment to the past—not only the American past, but to the best in Greek, Latin, Italian, French and Russian literature as well as English and American, and for his guilt about Latin-American writing. His "adventure on reality," as Mr. Paul calls it, required also an education in politics and economics. Later Hebrew demanded attention. The artist—and Wilson thought of all his work as an artist's—is committed to the past, to the present, and to the community.

Wilson's plays and his fiction, with the important exception of *Memoirs of Hecate County*, belong mostly to his earlier years. In respect of the need of discipline he did not discriminate between criticism and fiction, and there is a sense in which it is plausible to say, with Mr. Paul, that *Axel's Castle* and *I Thought of Daisy* belong together: they were worked on at the same time, and deal with the same problem, "the writer's allegiance to society." But even Mr. Paul, who devotes many pages to the novel, cannot deny that there is in it a programmatic stiffness, a lack of easy invention, which throws into high relief the ease and authority of the critical work; and Wilson's later memoir of Edna St. Vincent Millay tells us more and more movingly about the personal element than the story can, however teased out by interpreters. She fits, as Wilson's heroes do, into a system not so much autobiographical as symbolising the structure of the world as he finds it: with Scott Fitzgerald and Paul Rosenfeld and Mr. Justice Holmes and Whitehead and Gauss and Mario Praz.

This personal mythology is important and valuable to a writer, but Wilson speaks best when he speaks out. His prose style is designed

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for speaking out: his language is in his own terms, "the language of responsibility," as men engaged upon decisive action speak it; he is with Lincoln and Grant, not with the non-participants, Henry James and Henry Adams. If his prose has often an antique balance and his diction an etymological exactitude, this is proper enough, for his action is the action of structural thought; and if it sometimes seems pedantic in its cultivation this is because solecism and vulgarism enfeeble the activity of language. Wilson's prose, whether one speaks of it in quite this way or not, is certainly a powerful instrument; despite his own fears it has remained supple and strong over a long and arduous career. One consequence is that, schooled to correctness, one is shocked in Wilson by what would pass almost unnoticed in another writer; when he uses *attainted* for *tainted* a bell rings violently in the mind ("Mr. Krutch ... gives some evidence of being attainted with this tendency"). Anyway, there is small doubt that Wilson's style is better adapted to the exposition of literature and ideas than to fiction.

"Participation in public life through literature" is the programme of *Axel's Castle*; for Mr. Paul it is related to the same needs expressed in the novel, which is the author's need to extinguish in himself any symptoms of Axel-symbolist withdrawal and leaving living to the servants. Having written these books, he was ready for the labours of the Thirties; Mr. Paul quotes with approval a contemporary opinion that "one could plot a graph of Mr. Wilson from Proust to Karl Marx," and this is what he does, having chosen to make the inward movement of Wilson's mind the theme of his book. Consequently one needs, if one is to seize Wilson's real importance, which is a matter of creative criticism rather than of literary personality, to get some view of the outward as well as of the inward aspects of this as of other periods of his work; and this one can do by reading such books as Daniel Aaron's *Writers on the Left*, Malcolm Cowley's *Exile's Return*, Alfred Kazin's *Starting Out in the Thirties*, anything that, however obliquely, gives one the feeling of that decisive New York decade. Throughout this time Wilson, Trotskyist at least in this respect, maintained the values of bourgeois culture in the classless society, and saw in Marx and Engels poets of the political vision, as Michelet had been, and as he was now trying to be himself.

TO THE FINLAND STATION was the result of the arduous reading of the Thirties. Alfred Kazin reminds us of Wilson's invaluable self-discipline, a "habit of willed attention, of strained concentration," essential to work of this kind; and we can also remember his power to organise large bodies of material, to make self-consistent structures and establish large relevances. It is perhaps the noblest of Wilson's books. It appeared, as Paul remarks, too late, when Stalin had put an end to the dream of the "first truly human culture"; but in so far as it is about intellectual heroism and the role of honest imaginative thinking in the creation of a good society it is a work of permanent value. It is true that the tone is of biography rather than ideology; but this, like the author's tendency to identify his own mind and methods with those of the subjects, gives it an exceptional resonance, and makes it, like *Axel's Castle*, a book of use even to those who can no longer be instructed by it. One notes that the praise of Marx's expository method represents admiration for an ideal the author himself aims at ("the exposition of the theory—the dance of commodities, the cross-stitch of logic—is always followed by a documented picture of the capitalist laws at work ... we feel that we have been taken for the first time through the real structure of our civilisation, and that it is the ugliest that has ever existed."). Here I have had to leave out the long and powerful sentence in which the working of the capitalist laws is described; long, but lucid and forceful, as Wilson thinks expository sentences should sometimes be. And I take it that even the expert will not deny the clarity and cogency of the exposition in this book. Engels as a man is treated with affectionate admiration, but with Lenin one senses the author's detachment: just as Marx was "incapable of imagining a democracy," Lenin shunned "gratuitous intellectual activity." If Marx was psychologically crude, he was in other ways Wilsonian, "heavily loaded with the old paraphernalia of culture" and making of *Das Kapital*, somewhat unexpectedly, a work which has affinities with the *Anatomy of Melancholy*; but Lenin was not a scholar, not a writer; his style (as Gorky observed) was "the cold glitter of steel shavings." He was the New Man, the modernist of Marxism, exponent of an un-Wilsonian break with the past. "We don't need bourgeois democracy," he said in his speech at the Finland Station. In an epilogue looking back over the whole story in 1940, Wilson is finely himself; he cannot allow that the failure of Marxist dogma means the failure of all hope for a society without class exploitation. Doing without the Dialectic is only a small part of the challenge, which will "require of us," as he very characteristically concludes, "an unsleeping adaptive exercise of reason and instinct combined."

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From Mr. Paul's point of view, which is reasonable but as I say not the only one, there is a link between this book and Wilson's slightly later volume of *novelle, Memoirs of Hecate County*, comparable with that between *Axel's Castle* and *I Thought of Daisy*; on his view that "to some extent everything he does—and when he takes it up—is a personal index," the relation is inevitable. In the central story, "The Princess with the Golden Hair," Wilson certainly has rather private sources—he is thinking of Engels and Mary Burns, as well as of Casanova—and yet this is one of his most subtle and passionate comments on the evils of a society in which, as he remarked in *To the Finland Station*, "there is very little to choose between the physical degradation of the workers and the moral degradation of the masters." Wilson himself calls it his favourite among his works, and one can see why. Also it marked a turning point in his career; the last of the works in which commitment to public life is a central theme. The later books of travel, the bold attempt on the Dead Sea Scrolls, the works on the Iroquois, the Income Tax, the literature of the Civil War, and the culture of Canada, for all their urgent relation to his own unending self-examination and his concern with American culture, are works, by comparison, of exile. Hence the discontent of some compatriots.

But even from this very defective account of his career one can see that a stranger might very well use his privilege to call such criticism unjust. The example of Wilson—discipline, persistence, self-involvement, a willingness to acquire the means with which to practise an effective criticism—has been followed, but not adequately acknowledged, by younger Americans. To make possible an American criticism that would be strong enough for its job, to provide for it the strength, range and subtlety of the French, was the vast undertaking. Wilson himself saw that it meant good reviewing in the periodicals. The job begins there.

> It is no doubt impossible [he wrote in 1928] for an English-speaking country to hope for a literary criticism comparable to that of the French. . . . But when one considers the number of reviews, the immense amount of literary journalism that is now being published in New York, one asks oneself how it is possible for our reviewing to remain so puerile. . . . Since the death of Stuart P. Sherman, who was second-rate

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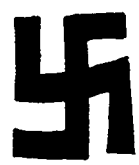

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> at best, there has not been a single American critic who regularly occupied himself in any authoritative way with contemporary literature.

He went on to list some of the evils of the situation which strong reviewing might have averted; many of them he himself was to tackle. But he also added, thinking again of himself, that first-rate criticism must come from writers: "No such creature exists as a full-time literary critic—that is, a writer who is at once first-rate and nothing but a literary critic." And so the task of providing America with a criticism was difficult even on the mundane level of simply finding time to do it. You had to review a lot but your reviewing would be useless unless you did other things on another level. Sometimes it wasn't possible to do both; during the years when he was reading for *To the Finland Station* Wilson, as he says, lost touch with what was going on. But by working enormously and being provident in the choice of subjects he succeeded remarkably in his attempt to do everything at once. Because he did so there *is* in America literate unacademic criticism.

One should say, then, that the size of Wilson's critical achievement, as the outsider sees it, cannot be measured by the more formal volumes, such as *Axel's Castle, The Triple Thinkers, The Wound and the Bow,* alone; one has to take account of the hundreds of shorter pieces, not merely because many of them were tributaries to these major streams, but also because they constitute in themselves that almost weekly intervention in the literary affairs of the time which probably, in the end, has the more decisive effect on taste, and on what happens next. Wilson has himself described how a career like this can be managed. In a very interesting piece called "Thoughts on Being Bibliographed" (1943) he complains that his kind of person doesn't seem to exist any more, a writer who is a critic and a journalist, free of the oppression and patronage of academics though having of course his own problems.

> To write what you are interested in writing and to succeed in getting editors to pay for it, is a feat that may require close calculation and a good deal of ingenuity. You have to learn to load solid matter into notices of ephemeral happenings; you have to develop a resourcefulness at pursuing a line of thought through pieces on miscellaneous and more or less fortuitous subjects; and you have to acquire a technique of slipping over on the routine of editors the deeper independent work which their over-anxious intentness on the fashions of the month or the week have conditioned them automatically to reject.... My [strategy] has usually been, first to get books for review... on subjects in which I happened to be interested; then, later, to use the scattered articles for writing general studies of these subjects; then, finally, to bring out a book in which groups of these essays were revised and combined.

Using this somewhat clumsy but necessary system, he tackled the self-imposed task of carrying on the work of Mencken; one part of it, for example, was to bring home to the bourgeois intellectual world the importance of the literature of post-Symbolism and the implications of the Russian Revolution. Now, he says (in 1943), he is too old for all that; and nobody else is doing it, partly because anybody who might have qualified himself is working in a university or having his talent wrecked in a different way by *Time, Life,* and *Fortune.* Wilson had a perfect right to say this about people who feel he has betrayed them by refusing to bear the strain for ever. The routine outlined above takes strength, courage, discipline, none of them to be rewarded by the gift of tenure, or by long, gentle sabbaticals. One sees, sadly, why Wilson is so unkind to academics, refusing their honorary degrees, and, if he admires them, as he did Newton Arvin, Saintsbury, Gauss, Kemp Smith, Whitehead, Praz, assuming that their ability to write creatively simply takes them out of the academic category, and so does not disturb his theory.

It is the routine reviewing, somewhat disparaged by Wilson himself, that gives the best evidence of hard labour and also, often enough, of disciplined commitment. The three large volumes which collect reviews and other fugitive pieces are, what can rarely be said for such collections of periodical criticisms, a great pleasure to read; the reviews frequently survive their subjects. As a great professional Wilson knows the ropes, and is willing to instruct. "The Literary Worker's Polonius," written in 1935, sets out schematically the duties of editors and contributors, the former obliged in honour to make quick decisions and quick payments, the latter needing to give the editors reasonable time to decide and consult, and to abstain from writing seductive covering letters. A whole section is given to reviewers, classified under five heads: People Who Want Work, Literary Columnists (overworked, don't expect accuracy), People Who Want to Write about Something Else (even if they let the author down, they are often interesting and should not be discouraged), Reviewer Experts (poets reviewing poets, etc., on the whole not a good thing), and Reviewer Critics. These last are extremely rare, and to earn the title an aspirant should "be more or less familiar, or be ready to familiarise himself, with the past work of every important writer he deals with.... He should also be

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able to see the author in relation to the national literature as a whole and the national literature in relation to other literatures." And so on. Only Sainte-Beuve, says Wilson, really fits into this category; but of course he does too. And when this paragon gets down to a book he must not shirk the most boring part of the job, the exposition of the contents, the summary: this is absolutely essential. Wilson does it, as a matter of fact, superbly. He really can "establish definite identities for the books that he discusses." It takes work, and more surprisingly brains, to do this. Yet it is only the start. In "A Modest Self-Tribute" (1952) Wilson is again insisting on the need for critics "to bring into one system the literatures of several cultures that have not been in close communication.... I may claim for myself, since nobody so far as I know, has ever yet claimed it for me, that I have tried to contribute a little to the general cross-fertilisation...."

To do this you need more than a "volatile curiosity," but you need that too. Some of the long essays in the latest book, which may be used to show how Wilson has wandered off in pursuit of his own private interests, are also evidence of his determination to find out what is necessary. Certainly he goes on rather about the Marquis de Sade; but he also explores *Doctor Zhivago* at great length. It strikes me as both typical and impressive that, returning for another go at T. S. Eliot in a review of "Myra Buttle's" *The Sweeniad*, Wilson took himself off to a library to read the "hilariously awful" epic, *Cadmus: The Poet and the World*, written earlier by Victor Purcell, the man behind the mask of "Myra Buttle." This later activity may not be as important as being the first to present André Malraux or Henry Miller to the American public, but it speaks of an inquisitive turn of mind and a willingness to walk to the library. Also it reminds one that one of the preservatives of Wilson's periodical criticism is that he can be rather sombrely funny. He did not much like writing for the *New Yorker*, but some of the pieces there printed have lasted wonderfully: the analysis of Ambassador Davies' prose, for instance, the attacks on detective stories (notably "Who Cares Who Killed Roger Ackroyd?"), and the judicious distaste of the article on Lloyd C. Douglas' best-seller, *The Robe*. In fact the pieces in *Classics and Commercials* are inferior to those in *Shores of Light* only if you miss, what had to go, the special excitements of the Twenties and Thirties. They belong to what Wilson called "the bleak and shrivelled Forties," and they address themselves to what seemed in need of informed attention at the time: the intellectual position of Archibald MacLeish in relation to the war; the new novelists: Cain, Steinbeck, O'Hara, Saroyan; Aldous Huxley, Evelyn Waugh (two excellent essays); Sartre, Firbank, and so on, with an extended memoir of Paul Rosenfeld at the end, corresponding to the memoir of Edna St. Vincent Millay at the end of *Shores of Light*. The new book, as its title suggests, wanders further from the beaten track, and has a lot about Swinburne and James Branch Cabell, but there are some comedy turns too, including Wilson getting lengthily angry about the way people abuse English.

IT IS, THEN, TRUE but unreasonable to complain that none of this has quite the bite of earlier work, done when Wilson was in the centre of things. *The Shores of Light* contains an imaginary dialogue between Paul Rosenfeld and Matthew Josephson (one of the original *Discordant Encounters*) which is so absolutely in the centre of the first controversies on modernism as to be even now immediately relevant. It was written in 1924; forty-two years on Mr. Tom Wolfe is doing well out of an *aperçu* of Josephson's in the Dialogue, which is that electric signs are nicer than art. Don't talk to me about art, he says—

> How can you set up these trivialities as rivals to the electric sign... a triumph of ingenuity, of colour, of imagination!—which slings its great gold-green-red symbol across the face of the heavens themselves...! I tell you that culture as you understand it is no longer of any value; the human race no longer believes in it. That is why I am giving my support to the campaign for Henry Ford as President.... Vote for Henry Ford! The Master Dadaist of the twentieth century!

In those days Wilson, not long down from Princeton, was living in the Village and learning his job. As a critic he did most things—vaudeville, the galleries, music, theatre—but he did them as a writer, and with a growing sense of the commitments to the modern and to politics, or rather to the task of making a literature and a criticism which would not simply exclude these. His interests narrowed, perhaps, but never before each had reached fruition in a book; perhaps he foresaw a time when literature and politics would be as inextricably blended in America as in *The Triple Thinkers* he saw them to be in Russia; or a time when a new biographical criticism would profit by the thesis of *The Wound and the Bow*. But of course he changed, moved on, a stranger in a changing world. It is sometimes said that behind every criticism there is a philosophy; Wilson's is steadily pragmatic.

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> All our activity, in whatever field it takes place, is an attempt to give meaning to our experience—that is, to make life more practicable.

This is as true of the fictions of Sophocles as of Euclid.

> Art has its origin in the need to pretend that human life is something other than it is, and, in a sense, by pretending this, it succeeds to some extent in transforming it.

This last remark belongs to 1922, and I suppose Wilson would have no reason to withdraw it now. The transformation of the world, as Wallace Stevens remarked, is the transformation of ourselves, and we do it with reason and imagination. What needs to be transformed, how transformations have historically occurred, and what is wrong with present attempts at transformation, are the legitimate and exhausting tasks of criticism. Wilson has worked at them as no other critic in his time. He dislikes my profession and my nationality, but if no American has yet claimed this for him I offer it as the most modest of tributes.

The Great Vowel Shift & All That

By Anthony Burgess

To know that Kingsley Amis makes affricates of his esses and that George Brown initiates more stop consonants than he explodes is to know nothing. A man's idiolect is no more a guide to his character or intelligence than the *Gestalt* of birthmarks on his left shoulder. To use language well does not mean that we have to understand the processes of language. Indeed, the traditional enmity between the scholastic disciplines of philology and literature is based on something deeper than irreconcilability of temperaments (the Keatsian dreamer and the swotter of paradigms): what you have there is the true and false snarling at each other. The student of literature is concerned with legitimate aesthetic enquiries: he analyses language as a vehicle of very rich, subtle and pleasurable communication. The philologist, on the other hand, derives little pangs of joy—of the intensity of curiously strong mint lozenges—from the contemplation of words without context, words in a void. It could be regarded as a kind of masturbation.

If I am being unfair, I am being unfair to myself. I recognise my own capacity for being excited by semantic and morphological change in isolated words, by the quaint and whimsical and surprising; I recognise also that this is a debased aesthetic pleasure, infra-literary. Huxley's *Eyeless in Gaza* presents in Mr. Bevis the lexicographer a squashy word-burbler who should be a horrible example for all time. "Bring buttered eggs for this young stalwart," he tells the waitress, twinkling at her as if she too knew that the term meant "foundation-worthy." He entertains ignorant orphans by telling them that "primrose" was "primerole" in Middle English—"a popular 'howler' like our old friend 'causeway'." There is material for a masque or morality in Frieda's running away from Ernest Weekley—a comfortable word-fancier, author of *The Romance of Words*—to set up house with D. H. Lawrence, an uncomfortable word-user. Those word-books by Ivor Brown, about the joys of "refocillate" and "doddipol," were very embarrassing. To love to make poems out of strange words is one thing; to cosset the words themselves, like so many budgerigars, is another—unpleasant and emasculated.

A good deal of the entertainment to be gained from Mario Pei's *The Story of Language*—now in its second edition[1]—is of the pure lexical kind. Words undergo curious semantic changes. Over the years a meaning can be totally reversed, as with "brave," whose root is to be found in "depraved" (Latin *pravus*—"crooked, scoundrelly"). "Nice" is ultimately from *nescius*—"stupid, unknowing." There are pejorative changes: a knave was once merely a young man (compare the court card, compare German *Knabe*); Chaucer uses "harlot" to mean "male-servant"; the exalted Arabic *al-wazir* became an Italian hangman's assistant (*aguzzino*). But the reverse process can take place: a marshal used to be a horseboy. A general word can turn into a special one: a deer is now a particular animal, but once (compare German *Tier*) it was any animal. English "lust" denotes a shameful longing; German *Lust* remains a generalised pleasure. Conversely, the special can become the general: Spanish *pajaro* means "bird" but used to stand for a sparrow. Words wander remark-

[1] *The Story of Language*. By Mario Pei. Allen & Unwin, 42s.

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ably. "Apricot" is "apricock" in Shakespeare. In Arabic it was *al-precoq*, which glues the article *al* on to Latin *praecox* ("early"). There is plenty of quaintness: "maudlin" goes back to the weeping Mary Magdalene; a thing that is tawdry is cheap enough to be bought at St. Audrey's Fair.

Need I go on? The point is that meanings change, and that too many tiny orgasms of pedantic joy can be popped off by contemplation of individual changes. But a further point—one for the linguist and not the mere word-fancier—is that semantic change, as also phonetic and morphological change, cannot be resisted. Language is a flux; language is autonomous; only fools (include Fowler if you wish) think that they can legislate for usage. The schoolmaster, cleric, or politician who attempts to fix the meaning of a term by reference to its etymology (often false etymology, too: how many speech-day addresses begin with "The meaning of 'educate' is 'draw out' "?) has no notion of the true nature of the communication system he uses professionally. The word-fancier is often the reader of old books and the most likely to be rigid, traditional, and authoritarian about usage. On the other hand, the linguist submits to the fact of fluidity: language is the river, not the embankment.

Our newspaper correspondence columns are full of peevishness about the alleged "debasement" of language, and yet what is usage except what people actually use? British Rail is following current usage in announcing "Due to fog on the line trains may run late": to make "owing to" otiose is a kind of progress. "To lay on the bed" is becoming an accepted demotic form, and those of us who still regard it as a solecism are sometimes prepared to use it facetiously (the first stage in the process of learning to use it seriously). An American language primer for troops in Viet Nam deliberately gives this form, since statistics show that the majority of G.I.s use it. The British working-classes continue to suffer from "gastric stomachs," and if that is a solecism so is our old friend (or Mr. Bevis') "causeway" or "penthouse" or "Jerusalem artichoke." The development of English as a spoken, not literary, medium rests with the majority of its speakers, meaning the women in the supermarkets and the men on the factory-floor. The educated have long since ceased to use a genuine spoken form of the language: their conversation derives from the written word (*e.g.*, Bernard Levin, Edward Lucie-Smith). Dr. Johnson was probably the misguided pioneer of book-talking, killer of those purely social elements in speech which Malinowski called "phatic." These—toasts like "May you live for ever and me live to bury you"; consolatory army-tags like "Cheer up lads it'll soon be Christmas"; stoic pleasantries like "Roll on death and let's have a do at the angels"—are unacceptable in educated speech but thoroughly natural in demotic. The professional linguist is less interested in that conscious control of language exerted by the highly literate than in what the people say.

THIS IS NOT to designate the linguist as a kind of anthropologist, investigating the signals and symbols of the more primitive social groups, though the anthropologist, as recent American studies indicate (I am thinking of such works as *Language in Culture and Society*, edited by Dell Hymes), is finding linguistics a new and valuable tool. What must chill the humanist about linguistics is its apparent lack of human reference. It is only in the semantic field that the world outside the laboratory seems to impinge, though meaning has more to do with social conventions than with the workings of the individual mind. To study phonetics is to examine the functioning of a machine, and even such a "human" phenomenon as the chaos of English spelling has to be explained mainly in physiological terms. Thus, there are two kinds of vowel-sound in English, the long (as in "see," "blue") and the short (as in "sit," "put"). The

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tongue, a highly mobile organ, finds it difficult to hold the position required for a long vowel, and, at one period of history (somewhere round the reign of Henry V), it revolted, confessed its instability, and turned its long vowels into diphthongs. So "house" ceased to be */huus/* and became */haus/*; "moon," seeing a gap where */uu/* used to be, rose to fill it, changing its moaning sound into a mooning one; "road," which had been pronounced something like "rawed," rose to fill the place of "moon," ending up with the diphthong we have today. Sounds changed but spelling stayed where it was; hence our present orthographic agonies.

Linguistics cannot explain why the Great Vowel Shift, as it is called, took place when it did—something outside pure physiology. But linguistics does not pretend to be able to explain anything beyond simple cause and effect—that, for instance, the "s" at the end of "dogs" is pronounced */z/* because of assimilation, the voiced sound */g/* insisting that the sound immediately following also be voiced, even though the letter that spells it is always associated with a hiss. It can explain certain morphological changes in terms of strong and weak stress (our medieval word-endings grew weaker and weaker and then disappeared). But, generally, it is dangerous to posit any overall theory—such as "inertia" or the progressive tendency to simplify—to explain linguistic change. Laws, like Grimm's or Verner's, can only codify change, saying how but not why. Despite the prophetic nightmare of Newspeak, nothing can shake the autonomy of language.

However individual words may change their form, sound, and meaning, form, sound, and meaning are abiding attributes of language and have to be studied. It is in the examination of form and sound in relation to meaning that the linguistic specialist must seem—to those impatient with any "scientific" approach to language—to perform the most useful task. One of the important concepts of our time is that of the phoneme, the significant or meaningful unit of speech. The number of sounds available to the human vocal organs is uncountable, but the phonemic principle bundles them together into families. The "*k*" sounds of "cat," "kill," "key," "talk," "tick," "teak" are all different, but they possess a common quiddity or "kayness": they are, says the linguist, allophones of the *k*-phoneme. Now the constitution of the phoneme varies from language to language. In English the "*k*" of "kin" has a puff of air after it, the "*k*" of "skin" does not, but we, the speakers, are unaware of this difference: an interchange of the two allophones would not affect the meanings of the two words. In Sanskrit, on the other hand, a puffed "*k*" and a puffless "*k*" are distinct phonemes, for *kala* (puffless) means "indistinct" and *khala* (puffed) means "threshing floor." The exploded "*t*" of Russian *brat* and the palatalised "*t*" of Russian *brat'* sound, to an English ear, like allophones of the one phoneme, but the first word means "brother" and the second means "to bring." It is by the charting of phonemic patterns appropriate to different languages that the best techniques of learning to speak them are being evolved; it is by understanding what is phonemic and what is allophonic that primitive languages still without alphabets are being given alphabets.

THE OTHER IMPORTANT linguistic concept is that of the morpheme, which subdivides the word (not, despite all our assumptions, the primal unit of speech) into its significant elements. "Tables" may be a word (whatever a word is: no one is quite sure), but the linguist is interested in seeing what the word is made of—the "free morpheme" (or "formant") "table"—capable of making sense on its own—and the "bound morpheme" "*s*", a pluraliser which can have no separate existence. Sometimes a word can consist of two bound morphemes, like "him" and "his," both of which contain the masculine pronominal element "*hi-*", given an objective and a possessive inflexion by, respectively, the bound morphemes, "*-m*" and "*-s*." Latin words yield easily to this mode of analysis: to parse a text in terms of morphemes obviates the need to learn paradigms before tackling literature. The bound forms *-t* and *-nt* denote, respectively, third person singular and third person plural; *ama-* signifies "love" (oblique, indicative); other bound morphemes (*-ba-*, for instance, standing for the imperfect) can be slipped in as tense-indicators.

Why, it may be asked, can't we be content with the traditional grammatical luggage, with its subject and predicate, parts of speech and so on? We can't be content because it never really applied to a living Western language and it is totally incapable of describing adequately an Eastern language. It was once believed that the traditional word-classes derived from basic psychological and metaphysical categories. No one makes that mistake now, but terms like "noun" and "adjective" are still thought to possess a timeless and universal validity. And yet a language like Malay refuses to submit to Western parsing. There are, for instance, words like *pun* and *-lah*, emphasisers or spot-lighters of a preceding form, which have no Indo-European equivalent. But even in the Indo-European group, the hoary rule of "no sentence without a verb" leaves Russian out of account: Russian gets on very nicely (as do most Eastern languages) without the copula "to be." It is time

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for us to start looking at language as it is, not as Renaissance pedants thought it ought to be, and to think in terms of more realistic categories.

Whether the approach to language demonstrated by Mario Pei in this book or, if we want to exchange the seminar for the laboratory, in his *Invitation to Linguistics,* is acceptable to those who approach language through literature—this is not really a question that ought to be asked. A more precise knowledge of how language functions will not, as I indicated at the beginning, bring us closer to an understanding of modern societies, or improve our ability to evaluate character or intelligence. But it will clear our minds of certain misconceptions about language—that, for instance, language maintains static standards of correctness which must not be transgressed against; that language is time's bequest to the educated; that some languages are superior to others; that some words are more beautiful than others; that the parts of the internal combustion engine should be known but linguistic terminology may be ignored; that curiosity about the most basic of social functions is most commonly expressed as a mere weak (or Weekley) cherishing of lexical *curiosa.*

Shonfield's Capitalism

Modern Capitalism. By ANDREW SHONFIELD. *Oxford,* 55s.

AS AN EXERCISE in the sustained exposition of complex materials, *Modern Capitalism* is little short of superb. Mr. Shonfield has selected a theme often muddled by rhetoric, speculation, amateur sociology, and ill-tempered polemic, and mastered enough of the factual evidence surrounding it to produce an invaluable guide to the workings of modern industrial societies. The theme can best be defined in a series of questions: has the old capitalist Adam changed his nature? has the business cycle been permanently tamed? are depression and unemployment afflictions of the past? have ancient conflicts between labour and capital subsided into polite conversations about the distribution of the fruits of an increasingly efficient economic organism? has modern government evolved from alliance to businessmen in capitalist states into an essentially neutral agent of economic growth, unflawed prosperity, and higher standards of living for rich and poor alike? On the whole Mr. Shon-

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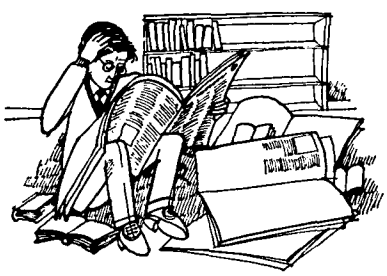
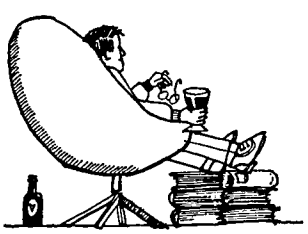
field's answers to these questions are affirmative.

The route to the answers is through a series of detailed and enlightening surveys of the economic policies of the important capitalist states, Japan alone excepted. As might be expected of a former economic editor of the London *Observer,* Shonfield writes with the authority of long intimacy about England's somewhat startled movement under the Tories from initial yearnings for free markets to such embryonic planning instruments as the National Economic Development Council and the National Incomes Commission. Here the sensitivity to national history which runs through the author's accounts of other nations' affairs is especially impressive. To cite just one important example, Shonfield in comparing French and English experience with planning suggests how much easier the French national tradition makes it for French bureaucrats to intervene selectively into the affairs of individual enterprises. The French record of state guidance, a line stretching from Colbert through Napoleon to the *Commissariat du Plan,* encourages planners to subject individual businessmen to the larger purposes of the state. In the same legal situation the English tradition of impartial treatment of individuals in the same category, fine as it is in most conceivable circumstances, nevertheless renders it exceedingly difficult for an English civil servant, trained in judicial attitudes, to reward the efficient additionally for their efficiency and to penalise the inefficient additionally for their inefficiency. On the peculiarities of British unions, the oddities of English company law, the mystique of the City and a dozen other arcane British topics, Shonfield is an irreplaceable interpreter.

If only for the English chapters, this book deserves close attention, not least by English readers. But much of the remainder of the volume is scarcely less impressive. Although the American section is comparatively brief, it is a perceptive analysis of the sacrifices to antique free market ideology of eight years of economic growth under the benign presidency of Dwight Eisenhower. The dreary tale is reasonably familiar as is its more sensible sequel, the "New Economics" belatedly popularised by John Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson. It has taken a long time for the mythology of frontier individualism even partially to yield to the complicated realities of interdependence in a modern industrial community. Even now large numbers of businessmen still cling to the old faith.

Shonfield has a sharp eye for American





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paradox. Take the militant Texas oilmen, gorged on tax favours, who are the most devoted supporters of free enterprise crusades. These same tycoons delight in the activities of the strangely-titled Texas Railroad Commission which regulates, in the interest of high prices, the amount of oil shipped out of the state. Indeed there is rather more "planning" occurring in the United States than either the planners or those planned for care to concede. If Shonfield had written this book a little later, he no doubt would have had some interesting things to say about President Johnson's recent use of the wage-price guideposts to "persuade" aluminium, copper, and steel corporations fully or partially to rescind price increases. In current Administration ideology, it almost appears that the way to avoid "planning" is to accept "planning's" consequences "willingly." To every nation its own therapeutic semantics.

For an economist as devoted to economic progress as the author of this book neither England nor the United States is a probable hero, except conceivably of a cautionary tale. It is de Gaulle's France which has feature-billing in the morality play of capitalism revised and revived. Two excellent books (Hackett and Bauchet) have described the growth of the French experiment in indicative planning. Like theirs, Shonfield's account is generally sympathetic to the French system of exemplary targets and varied pressures upon industries and firms to achieve the targets. Shonfield's treatment has the added virtue of dealing openly with one issue which is scamped in the earlier books—the precarious place of parliamentary democracy in an economy administered by technocrats. Despite his admiration for French achievements, Shonfield does not disguise two perceptions: growth has been facilitated by a parliamentary slumber at least until the 1965 elections, and, accordingly, the same orderly French pattern will be hard to replicate where active politics exist.

As one much less familiar with Italy and Germany than the author, I should possibly hesitate to state my sense that Shonfield is least sure-footed in his descriptions of these two economies, but even here the amount of sheer, organised information is impressive. Shonfield has interesting things to say about capitalism's most civilised outposts, Scandinavia and the Netherlands. The successful Swedish system of manpower management and the less successful Dutch experiment with national wage determination are tersely and fairly evaluated.

In short, Shonfield has carried off a feat in the writing of contemporary history—a realistic, analytic, focused guide to the institutions,

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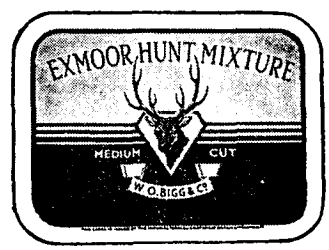

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problems, and accomplishments of mid-century capitalism. For some years to come, this book will be indispensable.

THE PROMISE of temporary immortality contained in the last sentence might be a good place to end a review of an excellent book. Yet in one way it is only a beginning, for Shonfield has laboured at least as hard to produce a theory of capitalistic evolution as a guide to capitalism's behaviour. Shonfield's argument is that, despite important differences in national tradition, economic potency, and recent historical experience, all the modern capitalistic economies are moving in the same direction. At the least, all of them have begun to accept as a consequence of government, responsibility for full employment, the need for increasingly subtle and powerful public interventions into the once-private affairs of trade unions and business enterprises. In this climate of varied government action, nationalisation as a cause has receded even in England where less than a decade ago the late Hugh Gaitskell suffered major defeat on this issue and in Germany where Willy Brandt has converted a once Marxist Socialist Democratic party into an only slightly more leftish Christian Democratic party.

Contemporary capitalism has claimed a second ideological victim. Something sad has happened to the old egalitarian thrust towards more nearly equal distribution of income and wealth. Although British Labour in office is marginally harder on the rich than are the Tories, and American Democrats make slightly more populist sounds than American Republicans, it remains true that modern radical or liberal political parties are no longer redistributionist in any major way. As the *New Statesman* casually observed, "It is far easier, politically and economically, to redistribute an increment in output than to take from people what they already have." Which rather suggests that the most that the *New Statesman*'s usually more exigent leader writer demands from Mr. Wilson is a rather more equitable distribution of the economy's gain, not of its existing wealth.

What appears to have dampened the old quarrels over the division of the social pie is a general recognition that it is better to take the same share of a bigger pie each year than to force a redistribution against the sabotage and opposition of those with the larger slices. And accompanying this social recognition has been the increased readiness of the wealthy to spread welfare nets for the convenience of the unlucky, an ability to manage modern economies efficiently enough to diminish the number of people who require the safety nets, and a reasonable expectation of continuous prosperity and rising standards of life for all.

Deprived of so many of its traditional rallying cries, politics may be less exciting than in the days when the class war aroused the beast in even gentle hearts; but never before have so many been so prosperous for so long. This is fine, but what disturbs Shonfield (and this reviewer) is the difficulty of exercising democratic choice and parliamentary control over the activities of the executive branch of governments and, still more, over the executive branch's planners. Even in England it has not been easy for ordinary M.P.s to know what has been happening in nationalised industries, much less to influence these industries' investment and pricing policies. In France the successive four-year plans have expressed the national aspirations of General de Gaulle and the priorities of the *Commissariat du Plan*, an élitist group working in close cooperation with French bankers and industrialists and in isolation from unions and political parties.

POSSIBLY THE MOST INTERESTING instance of the problem's pervasiveness is the strange case of the United States. Here is a country practically allergic to public planning. In the New Deal era, Congress abolished the National Resources Planning Board evidently on the ground that, taking its title seriously, the Board's members had actually examined some possible avenues to a rational American future. Somewhat later, when Congress in 1946 passed an Employment Act, the lawmakers insisted on a preamble which devoted far more space to reiteration of Congress' attachment to free enterprise than to an explanation of the law's original purposes (the definition of a national responsibility for the creation and maintenance of full employment). During the somnolent Eisenhower years,

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the President's most influential cabinet officer, Secretary of Treasury George Humphrey, warned repeatedly of the danger that unbalanced federal budgets would plunge the country into hair-curling depressions. When asked by President Kennedy to cede to the executive a small fraction of its constitutional authority over tax rates, Congress failed so much as to hold hearings on the President's proposal.

Yet within this singularly unpromising context something very peculiar indeed has occurred—nothing less than the quiet emergence of a whole collection of "voluntary" arrangements. Thus major corporations curtail capital exports, and large banks restrict overseas lending, more or less in accordance with targets set for them by the Secretary of Commerce and the Federal Reserve Board. Most striking of all are the wage-price guideposts. Here the history is fascinating. In January, 1962, the Council of Economic Advisers made a quiet suggestion in the President's *Economic Report*. It amounted to a recipe for the avoidance of inflation. If labour unions contented themselves each year with dollar gains no larger than the nation's average gain in per capita productivity then businessmen could hold their prices, on the average, unchanged. Of course, where an industry's productivity gain lagged behind the national average, price increases were in order; but offsetting such episodes were to be the price decreases posted by industries whose productivity gains outstripped the national average performance.

Neither a Presidential proclamation nor a Congressional action, this first statement of the wage-price guidepost was in appearance little more than a contribution to a national discussion. Yet somehow in the ensuing four years the guideposts have produced clashes between two Presidents and several major industries, a growing tendency for corporate leaders to check their pricing plans with the Council of Economic Advisers, severe pressure on trade unions to accept appropriate settlements, and something approximating public acceptance of the President's propriety in defining the national interest in private economic decisions. Four years ago it would have been scarcely conceivable that a President and his Secretary of Labour should reprove a Mayor of New York (even of the opposite political party) for settling a crippling subway strike by granting an intransigent union considerably more than the 3·2 per cent increase which the guideposts prescribed. Yet in January this was precisely the way Mr. Johnson and Mr. Wirtz treated Mayor John Lindsay's agreement with the Transit Workers' Union.

This recital should not be taken to mean a rapid American march to planning *à la française*. The wage-price guideposts have been only sporadically applied and arguments about their efficacy have been heated. What is remarkable is general acceptance of the terms of the argument. The quarrel among economists and the public more generally is not about the goals of the guideposts or even their propriety, it is an argument about how well they work. Americans have accepted the technique. Marshall McLuhan has said that the medium defines the message. We appear to be in some danger, in the United States of all places, that our politics in the future will be interpreted through the techniques of planning and public administration.

ANGLO-SAXON COMMUNITIES have usually assumed that the general interest emerges from the clash of opposed views, expressed in political forums open to all parties. What happens when opposed judgments of public investment, social priority, community design, health care, housing provision are quietly debated *and decided* by the experts? That this has not yet occurred either in England or in the United States is occasion for rejoicing. That it may well occur if present tendencies work themselves out is the truly disturbing message of Andrew Shonfield's excellent treatise.

Robert Lekachman

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POINTS OF THE COMPASS

Letter from Japan

The Challenge of "Soka Gakkai"

THE POPULAR IMAGE of Buddhism as a mild, ethereal religion, aloof from the passions and turmoil of this fleeting world, has been jolted by recent events. In South Viet Nam saffron-robed monks have asserted themselves as fervid proponents of a form of anti-Western neutralism that has disconcerted American policy. Inevitably the question arises: can the same sort of thing happen in other countries where Buddhism is the dominant creed? Above all, can it happen in the West's principal ally, Japan? The upsurge of Soka Gakkai, the vast, militant society of lay members of the Buddhist Nichiren Shu sect, may suggest the answer.

Founded in 1939 by an obscure Japanese schoolteacher, Soka Gakkai (the Value-Creating Academy) made little headway during the ultra-nationalist period; after 1945 it had to compete with the "new religions" that mushroomed in the aftermath of defeat. It was not until a decade ago that it shot ahead of all other religious groups. Today it has a membership of at least ten million, over ten per cent of the Japanese population and a hundred times the size of the Communist Party in Japan. Soka Gakkai is growing at a fantastic rate and has also established itself on the political scene. With twenty members in the Upper House of the National Diet and about 1,000 in local legislative assemblies, it is putting up thirty-two candidates for the Lower House, and they are all likely to win.

In the elections last July the Soka Gakkai party got more than 12 per cent of the popular vote, more than half that of the Socialists, and clearly established itself as the third party in Japan.

Not surprisingly this noisy, dynamic organisation has become a favourite subject for journalists. On the whole it has had a bad press. Often it is treated as something of a joke, unworthy of serious attention by political analysts. Others tend to dismiss it as a flash in the pan, one of numerous revivalist groups that shoot up in Japan only to vanish after a few years. More frequently Soka Gakkai is pictured as a sinister right-wing group with fascistic, militarist overtones. When I lived in Japan from 1956 to 1959 writing a book on Japanese politics, I examined Soka Gakkai as one of many efforts to fill the vacuum left by the disappearance of traditional values. At that time it had only about one-fifth of its present membership, but I was assured that it had "already reached its apogee" and would soon suffer from the type of factional strife that bedevils most Japanese organisations. Returning to Japan recently after five years, I was interested to see what had happened to this huge politico-religious group, about which I had read so many conflicting reports, and to discover its significance in the present Japanese scene and for future developments in Asia.

ON A STEAMING August day I set off for the religious headquarters of the movement at the base of Mount Fuji, a three hours' train journey from Tokyo. The mountain itself was hidden by the usual summer haze, yet one could feel its presence dominating the ancient Taiseki Temple, the modernistic Reception Hall, and all the surrounding buildings. Armed with an introduction from an ardent Soka Gakkai organiser whom I had met in Tokyo, I finally discovered the correct office and was assigned to a guide. He was a brisk, bespectacled young man, who divided his time between work at the Fuji headquarters and local politics in Tokyo.

First I was taken to see the battalions of pilgrims arriving for their two-day stay at the temple. They came by great busloads from every part of Japan. At present there are some 10,000 visitors a day; I was told that, if all the applications were accepted, the number would be double, but that no more could be handled until the road from the station to the headquarters was widened.

The arrangements for receiving the pilgrims are impressive. Efficiently marshalled in groups of 1,500, they are first taken to the dormitories, where the men change into white clothes. They then proceed to the temple itself to view the Great *Go-honzon*, the principal worship-object of the sect. This is a tablet of camphor wood inscribed with a sacred formula and purported to be the work of Saint Nichiren himself. Most scholars deny its authenticity; but this does not diminish the enthusiasm of the pilgrims, for whom the first visit to the *Go-honzon* is a

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moment of culmination and of mystical joy. As a non-believer I was not allowed to enter the sanctuary, but I was able to observe the look of rapt excitement on the faces of the hundreds of pilgrims as they waited for the climactic moment when they would be led by their priests in the mass chanting of the sacred formula, *Namu Myoho Renge Kyo* ("Glory to the Sutra of the Lotus of the Supreme Law!"). A replica of the *Go-honzon* is ensconced in the house of every believer, all other religious images being discarded in its honour, and the family's daily worship before this image (the Crucifix equivalent) is central to their religious life. A recent article in *Seikyo News*, the English organ of Soka Gakkai, discusses the importance of the image:

> "The *Go-honzon* is more valuable than the most precious gem in the world... [we must] protect the *Go-honzon* even at the risk of our lives."

After I had watched some three thousand pilgrims passing quietly through the outer halls towards the main sanctuary, the male groups forming a huge sea of white, the women comparatively drab in their everyday clothes, I was led along a magnificent row of cedars to visit the founder's tomb. As we walked up the hill, the sound of the pilgrims' chanting became fainter and was soon drowned by the shrill chirp of the cicadas. Noticing some mysterious insignia on my guide's sleeve, I was reminded of a recent article in a mass-circulation magazine describing the para-military organisation of Soka Gakkai, and I asked him what rank he held in the hierarchy. He indignantly denied that the group tolerated any militarist trappings. "We are Buddhists," he declared, "and hate everything about war and armies." The picture given by most of the press was totally misleading: far from being militarist, he said, Soka Gakkai was staunchly opposed to any tampering with the Japanese Constitution that might legalise rearmament, and had in fact been the only group openly to oppose the military during the war. He reminded me that their founder, before whose simple tomb we were now standing, had been thrown into prison by the militarists and had died there of malnutrition in 1944. I did not pursue the subject.

On returning to the main group of buildings, we visited the vast Reception Hall, which had recently been completed at the cost of several million dollars and which contained valuable materials from all over the world. The main assembly hall, which is used for lectures, films, and prayer meetings, was the largest, though certainly not the most beautiful, room I had seen in Japan. All this, however, was to be dwarfed by the new building, a colossal marble structure which would be constructed in a few years. It occurred to me that the purpose of this lavish expenditure was similar to that which produced the opulent Moscow underground stations in the 1930s: to provide a vision of splendour for people whose everyday lives are drab and esurient. I was also shown the dormitories, and observed one of many private meetings in which clusters of about a dozen pilgrims sat on straw mats discussing their spiritual and material "difficulties" (*nayami*). These discussions, which are usually led by one white-robed priest and one lay official, provide a form of group therapy much valued by Soka Gakkai and its members.

My tour came to an end rather abruptly when my guide left me in the corner of a large room and said that he would telephone for a taxi to take me to the station. After about ten minutes the room filled up with Soka Gakkai officials and I heard one of them giving detailed instructions about the reception of a huge group of pilgrims expected to arrive shortly from Osaka: "Section Leader Tanaka will check the first three busloads and conduct them to Dormitory B, etc." I began to feel like a spy; and no doubt I looked like one, for presently an official approached me and politely but firmly asked what I was doing in the room. I explained that I was waiting for a taxi, which at the moment seemed improbable even to myself. The man asked me a few questions in a cold, indirect manner which contrasted strikingly with the usual Japanese approach to foreigners. At this juncture another official fortunately appeared and announced that my taxi had come.

The driver turned out to be an ardent member of Soka Gakkai, and as we rattled along the hot, dusty road he told me how it had changed his life. It was a typical before-and-after story, in which "before" was an existence of rowdy squalor involving drunkenness, tuberculosis, unemployment, and gambling. After a long struggle his sister had converted him to the Nichiren Shu sect and had persuaded him to join Soka Gakkai. Now my driver was a good family man, he owned his own taxi, he was a "tutor in tenets of the faith" and expected shortly to be promoted to the rank of "lecturer." It all sounded too good to be true; yet this was precisely the type of metamorphosis about which I was to hear from one Soka Gakkai member after another.

My driver told me that he had no truck with the "new religions," and he strongly objected to the tendency of journalists to group Soka Gakkai among them. This too was a point that I heard

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from many believers. Ever since the 1880s there has been a spate of these so-called "new religions," usually founded by men and women with scant education but considerable charisma. Often inspired by a mixture of Shinto and popular Buddhist beliefs, the religions have been marked by simple doctrines and a naïve, highly emotional approach. Professor Takagi, a leading expert on the subject, points out that their main function has been to fill the gaps left by the established religions and to help people cope with life in a rapidly changing society. Frequently the founders are represented as "living gods," and believers are told that they can solve their problems by relying on supernatural forces. In 1951, towards the end of the Occupation period, there were some six hundred such "new religions," mostly small and ephemeral. Whether or not Soka Gakkai belongs with them is a matter of definition. Its members all adhere to the Nichiren Shu sect, which dates from the 13th century and can scarcely be described as new. Sociologically it has much in common with the other groups (though this was not a point I wanted to argue with my perfervid taxi-driver). Yet Soka Gakkai is unusual, if not unique, in many respects—its militancy, its well-knit organisation and vast membership, its political involvement, and above all its intolerance.

HERE THE INFLUENCE of Saint Nichiren is obvious. In a country where religious history is marked by eclecticism and compromise he was as violent in his condemnation of non-followers as Luther himself. His description of other sects makes lively reading: "The Nembutsu," he wrote, "is Hell; the Zen are devils; the Shingon is national ruin; and the Risshu are traitors to the country...." Regarding himself as a Messiah who had come to save Japan from perdition, he demanded that his followers reject all evidence of other faith and prove their sincerity by constantly making converts. With its strong nationalist overtones the Nichiren sect played an important part during the 1930s (though during the war it was persecuted), and it was involved in many of the sanguinary *coups* of that period. Nichiren Shu, one of the few active, proselytising sects in Japan, has been keenly concerned with secular affairs, and no left-wing *demo* in post-war Tokyo is complete without a counter-demonstration by a group of drum-thumping Nichiren priests. It is hardly a coincidence that Soka Gakkai, the first major politico-religious organisation in modern Japanese history, should belong to this 700-year-old tradition. When *Seikyo Shimbun*, the Soka Gakkai journal with its two million circulation, regularly refers to other Buddhist denominations as *jashu* ("evil sects"), it is speaking in the unmistakable accents of Nichiren himself.

Nichiren Shu, like most forms of Japanese Buddhism, is split into numerous sub-sects. The adherents of Soka Gakkai naturally insist that theirs is the true sect, the only one that possesses the authority of Nichiren. They proudly claim that their Fuji headquarters contain not only the remains of Nichiren but one of his teeth, a magic object on which flesh is still growing. Though the historical Buddha is respected, actual worship must be reserved for Nichiren:

> "The True Buddha in these Latter Days of the Law [writes the President, Mr. Daisaku Ikeda] is Saint Nichiren. He is to be worshipped by all people throughout the world."

THE CREED of Soka Gakkai, as evolved by the founder some thirty-five years ago, is a naïve form of utilitarianism couched in somewhat peculiar terminology. The main aim is to secure man's happiness, and this can be done by the creation of proper "values" of which the most important is private and social "gain." The philosophical, transcendental, and mystical aspects of religion are disregarded; everything is focused on finding the most practical answers to mundane situations. "What is the purpose of Soka Gakkai?" asks the Questions Forum in a recent issue of *Seikyo News*. Answer:

> "To give absolute happiness to each individual. ... Most people are afflicted with various problems ... either spiritual, physical, or material. But everyone who believes in the *Go-honzon* can solve any problem and lead a happy life. Soka Gakkai also strives to attain prosperity of a nation and the everlasting peace of the world. The true intention of Saint Nichiren is to save the whole world through the attainment of each individual's happiness."

The approach, in other words, is eminently practical and worldly, as suits a nation that does not think much in terms of doctrine; and it follows that the leadership of Soka Gakkai should be secular, not priestly. This stress on material concerns often strikes Western observers as anomalous in a religion whose original aim is to overcome desire, the source of all suffering, and to escape from the sad, evanescent world. Historically, however, most Buddhist sects have not hesitated to compromise between worldly and spiritual objectives, and here again Soka Gakkai belongs squarely to the Japanese tradition.

AFTER MY RETURN from the Fuji headquarters, I paid several visits to temples of the Nichiren Shu sect in the suburbs of Tokyo, and was invariably impressed by their vibrant, enthusiastic

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atmosphere. Buddhist temples in Japan tend to be as quiet as the average French village church; but those associated with Soka Gakkai are as crowded and lively as a *pachinko* parlour. When I first entered one of these temples in the middle of a weekday afternoon, I was surprised to find it packed with hundreds of worshippers. Most of them were young (which is also unusual for Buddhist temples) and there were at least as many men as women. They were chanting the sacred *Daimoku* formula in clamorous unison, and so absorbing was the effect of its endless repetitions that not a single person seemed to notice the lone foreigner who came and squatted on the straw mat among them. Presently I saw that the face of the white-shirted young man next to me was covered with tears—inspired not (I think) by my proximity, but by the overpowering, hypnotic effect of the *Daimoku* chanting. After some twenty minutes of repetition a priest led a recitation of the Lotus Sutra at breakneck speed, and later a young woman, who introduced herself as a shop-assistant, stood up and with a look of trance-like joy described her recent visit to the Great *Go-honzon* at Fuji. There was a general air of emotionalism that many observers must find distasteful; but there is no denying the vitality and energy that pervades this temple and others of its kind.

WHAT, then, are the reasons for the success of this particular sect in a country that is so widely described as having become a-religious?

The energetic, youthful leadership is one important factor. The president, Mr. Ikeda, though officially regarded as a reincarnation of Saint Nichiren, is a simple, genial man of about forty; he has a sincere, appealing personality and is immensely popular among his followers. Most of the other controlling positions in Soka Gakkai are held by young men; together they have built up a highly efficient body, whose organisation is envied by the Communist Party itself. There are 63 headquarters and over 1,000 chapters throughout the world, including the United States and many Asian and European countries. The basic unit is the *kumi*, a group of ten or less households living close to each other and meeting regularly for discussion and prayer. The *kumi* is the base of a pyramid of larger units, whose apex is a Board of Directors under the President. There is also an ingenious horizontal system, in which the entire country is divided into blocks and members belong to the block of their present place of residence.

The financing is equally efficient: though there is no regular membership fee, there are about 100,000 supporting members, including many businessmen who contribute large sums annually. Another source of revenue is Soka Gakkai's £2 million-a-year publishing empire, which pours out popular newspapers, books, and magazines. There are also special collections, mainly for building; when a new temple was planned recently at the Fuji headquarters, £3 million was collected in less than a fortnight.

A primary reason for Soka Gakkai's fabulous membership is its aggressive missionary technique, which belongs to the Nichiren tradition of *shakubuku* or forcible persuasion. Having been exposed to a certain amount of *shakubuku* myself, I can attest to the tireless and effective methods used by experienced recruiters, whose promotion in the hierarchy is at least partly dependent on the quantity and quality of their converts. "Don't take no for an answer!" is obviously their point of departure, and arguments are cleverly selected to suit each prospective believer. Lately the leaders of Soka Gakkai have realised that its members' reputation for pious nagging and high-pressure techniques has begun to give them a bad name, and recruiters are being advised against excessive enthusiasm. A recent issue of the *Seikyo Graphic* has a photograph of two stalwart women trying to convert a hapless young man on the street; the accompanying caption warns, "*Shakubuku* never involves the application of any pressure, because conversion can never be obtained on the basis of coercion. There should never be any thoughtless actions on the part of Gakkai members." It is clear, nonetheless, that people living in predominantly Soka Gakkai areas are often under almost irresistible pressure to join. Members bent on working conversions dominate a neighbourhood with repeated door-to-door calls, using as one of their most effective arguments the rapid growth of Soka Gakkai. Most Japanese, particularly the less sophisticated, cannot resist joining whatever seems to be the coming thing. Once a foothold is gained in a neighbourhood, conversions come rapidly; for the Japanese as a rule find it difficult to avoid group pressures, and rare is the Japanese willing to be odd-man-out.

EFFICIENT ORGANISATION and recruitment are of course not enough in themselves. The reason that Soka Gakkai appeals so successfully to millions of Japanese is that it appears to provide a solution to their worldly difficulties. Among its main claims is the cure of illness. The young President, Mr. Ikeda, is one of the many believers who are said to have cured themselves of tuberculosis; and Soka Gakkai publications are full of stories of people who have rapidly recovered by faith in the *Go-honzon* when all medical means have proved

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ineffective. Tuberculosis, polio, ulcers, and cancer are among the hundreds of ailments that believers are alleged to have overcome. Many psychosomatic disorders can of course be cured by faith, but a good proportion of the miracle healing claimed by Soka Gakkai is fanciful.

Membership is also said to help one out of economic troubles. Many are the stories of people on the verge of financial disaster who became solvent, or even rich, through joining Soka Gakkai. The sense of belonging to a large, powerful group, and support from fellow-believers, can certainly be a psychological and material help in moments of need; and as a matter of religious duty Soka Gakkai members often refer business to each other or find jobs for unemployed co-believers. Even here the claims are often quixotic. I was told of a young nightclub hostess who had accumulated debts and was in critical financial straits. Through one of her colleagues she joined Soka Gakkai and on the very day following received a cable from a former customer, a rich American businessman, asking her to come to New York and marry him. This happy tale, which is said to have produced a rich crop of recruits among hostesses and bar-girls, had one credible ingredient: the customer in question was well in his seventies.

MORE IMPORTANT THAN any of these supposed benefits is the way in which Soka Gakkai helps its members overcome the social dislocation and psychological disorientation that have resulted from the rapid build-up of Japanese cities. By providing purposeful activity, group reintegration, and belief in something that transcends the petty cares of everyday life, it gives a *raison d'être* to millions of people who for one reason or another feel that they have been left out of the great post-war advance in Japan's economy. Members no longer feel they are living only for their own limited hopes but have the reassuring sense of belonging to a big reformist organisation, whose adherents are all duty-bound to help each other. The bonds of selfishness are broken; the fierce competitiveness of post-war Japanese society is side-stepped for something cosier and kinder. Much of its appeal is therefore directed to young migrant workers and to lower levels of the urban working class who, belonging to small shops and industries or being unskilled and semi-employed, have not profited from the benefits secured by the large-enterprise unions. To such people it offers both a sense of social identification, which in earlier days was provided by the armed forces, and a substitute for the official State religion that existed under the old Emperor system. The characteristic Soka Gakkai activities are not church services but group meetings in which members unburden their problems to each other's sympathetic ears; beyond these therapeutic discussion gatherings there are "body-building clubs," "singing circles," "culture festivals," and rallies of a type especially popular in Japan. Thanks to constant activities like these, Soka Gakkai helps to relieve people—especially the less favoured members of the community—from their dissatisfactions and frustrations and to improve their family life. "The home community as a vehicle of salvation" is a slogan of the Nichiren Shu sect: by satisfying the common emotional needs of its members, Soka Gakkai helps them achieve what they describe as a "bright home."

Many of the needs that win people to Soka Gakkai might under other circumstances lead them to the Socialist or Communist parties, which at least offer more coherent programmes. Except for the promise of miracle cures, the left-wing groups do potentially have much the same appeal. Why has Soka Gakkai proved overwhelmingly more attractive to many? The first reason lies in its emotional, revivalist, irrational, magic aspects which, though alienating most intellectuals, attract the less educated, unsophisticated elements of the community. Furthermore the left-wing parties tend to be associated with large-enterprise unions, which are precisely the groups from which so many Soka Gakkai members are excluded. Far more important, however, in what remains a very insular country, is the essential Japaneseness of Soka Gakkai. While both the Socialists and the Communists have a distinctly foreign flavour, the Nichiren Shu sect and its society of lay members are Japanese through and through. The pre-1945 form of militarist, Japanese ultra-nationalism has virtually disappeared; but nationalist sentiment remains a powerful force, and Nichiren's idea of a universal church based in Japan is bound to exert an emotional appeal.

This is the significance of the overseas activities of Soka Gakkai, which in South Korea, the Philippines, and other parts of Asia aims to build up what has been described as a "religious co-prosperity sphere." Many Asian students in Japan have been recruited into its ranks, and "missionaries" have been dispatched throughout South-east Asia. There is little chance of success in this particular direction. But the fact that Soka Gakkai emphasises the centrality of Japan in its Messianic schemes for a new world adds to the appeal and glamour of the organisation.

SINCE IT STARTED to participate openly in politics, Soka Gakkai has acquired a new significance for Japan and, potentially, the rest of the world. The organisation's primary aim is to help the individual in his daily life; but in order to accomplish this the leaders have realised

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that religion is not enough. Last year they accordingly established the *Komei* (Fair and Bright) Party as a full-fledged political party "to promote equitable national prosperity and to ensure world peace." On the national level the objective is to consolidate a "third culture" between the government of the conservative establishment and the Marxist-oriented Socialists:

> "Marxism claims respect for man but disregards the rights of the individual, while capitalism is built on the sacrifice of certain individuals for others. Thus the only reason for having respect for man is found in the Buddha teaching that all men are equally partakers of the Buddha nature."

At an early stage Soka Gakkai acquired the reputation of being anti-union; but recently it has taken an increasingly "progressive" stand and is evidently trying to steal the thunder of the left by advocating a "neo-socialist society" in Japan. Its political slogans, which call for a fairer distribution of national prosperity and the elimination of corruption, appeal to millions of voters who, though disenchanted with the conservatives, would hesitate to support a left-wing party. Last summer, when the Tokyo Municipal Assembly, acting with unprecedented dispatch, voted itself a generous increase in salaries, the Soka Gakkai members announced that they would give all their extra pay to a fund for needy children. They have also made diligent efforts to improve the appalling sewage situation in Tokyo (for which they will earn everyone's gratitude) and were conspicuously active in helping the victims of the great Niigata earthquake.

In international politics too Soka Gakkai advocated a "third culture" and insists that Japan must take a neutral stand ("global nationalism" is the current term) between the great power blocs. The conservatives are condemned for truckling to the United States, the Socialists and Communists for being committed to the Soviet Union and China respectively; only Soka Gakkai is exclusively on the side of Japan and is free to work for the spread of "Buddhist democracy" and world peace. The implications that this may have for foreign policy in the Far East are evident.

Soka Gakkai, despite its tough, militant methods, is clearly not militarist; and to describe it as "neo-fascist" or "right-wing" is a misleading oversimplification. It is a popular, revivalist, politico-religious group that promises, and indeed provides, solutions for many of the difficulties that beset the less favoured elements of the population, notably the unorganised members of the urban working class. For increasing millions of Japanese people it satisfies needs that other religions and parties seem unable to meet.

In politics Soka Gakkai's stand between the two extremes is one of nationalist neutralism, which has a great appeal in to-day's Japan. The ultimate aim is to make its creed the state religion of Japan, which will require a majority in the Diet. What are its prospects? It is clear that we cannot predict the success of Soka Gakkai by simply extending the dramatic curve of its recent advance. There have been evangelical movements before in Japanese history (though never on this scale) and most of them have become dormant or have fizzled out entirely. The larger Soka Gakkai grows and the more it becomes involved in politics, the greater is the chance of disruptive factionalism. Furthermore, if the Japanese economy continues to develop and prosperity seeps down to lower levels, time will not be on its side, for more and more people will find the solutions to their difficulties elsewhere.

Yet this immensely popular Buddhist-political movement is not to be taken lightly. With its young, energetic leadership and its powerful youth section, it is likely to continue asserting itself both in social life and in politics. Though it can probably never acquire a parliamentary majority, it may (especially in time of crisis) exert an important influence on the country's course—and this influence will favour a stronger, more independent, and probably neutralist policy for Japan.

Ivan Morris

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AUTHORS & CRITICS

Hegel & His Apologists

IN READING the passionate replies of Drs. Avineri and Pelczynski to my review-article of *Hegel's Political Writings,* I had somewhat the same feeling—making allowance for the difference in subject-matter—one normally experiences in reading a disquisition by circle-squarers. After all, I made no startling claim in maintaining that Hegel was a conservative, national thinker, *not* a racist, *not* a totalitarian. What I was mostly concerned to show was that to the extent extra-philosophical motives influenced Hegel's thought, and there is considerably more to his thought than his political philosophy, his early commitments throw light on the origin and development of his doctrine of the concrete universal and some of the inconsistencies of its application. To be charged with perverse misrepresentation of Hegel when I could more plausibly be taxed with accepting the conventional designation of him seems to me to be positively bizarre. Most expositors of Hegel, and not only his critics, have regarded Hegel as a conservative thinker as far as his own doctrines and allegiance go. They may all be wrong. Nonetheless until that is clearly established, it is somewhat startling to read that Hegel was not a conservative but a liberal, and indeed, a liberal like Tom Paine! And almost as startling is to read the heated denial that Hegel was a nationalist.

In my rejoinder I shall try to show that Hegel cannot legitimately be regarded as a liberal either in thought or practice, that his social and political philosophy is closer to Edmund Burke than to Tom Paine, and that he was a German nationalist in the sense I ascribed to him. To say this is not to say that Hegel's position is identical with Burke's or that his nationalism is like that of Father Jahn or of any other romantic fanatic.

I shall begin by citing a few pieces of "external" evidence to show how extraordinary is the judgment that Hegel was a liberal, "external" in that no exegesis of Hegel's text is required to understand them.

1. Hegel opposed the French Revolution of 1830 and even more bitterly the English Reform Bill of 1831. His grounds of opposition are instructive. He did not deny the existence of abuses and injustices in the prevailing system of representation and in society at large. But he feared far more the broadening of the electoral base. For this might well lead to social and political revolution. Hegel agrees with the fears expressed by the Duke of Wellington that if the Bill is adopted "in the place of those to whom the care of the public is now entrusted in Parliament, altogether different men will arrive...." And like Wellington, Hegel denies that "shopkeepers of whom the great majority of voters will consist as a result of the new bill" are fit to elect those who must make decisions on domestic and foreign affairs. The whole essay (and not this essay alone) expresses a contempt for popular rule and a preference for a self-perpetuating bureaucracy of officials inspired by Reason. To be sure, one can be a liberal and distrustful of the sovereignty of the people and hedge it about with certain restraints, but in the last analysis liberalism accepts the view that government must be responsible to the people. For Hegel, however, government owes responsibility only to the State as Reason—the metaphysical abstraction which concealed the realities of power in absolutist Germany, and anywhere else it has been invoked. The flavour of Hegel's "liberalism" may be gathered from the invidious comparisons he draws between France and England, on the one hand, and Germany on the other. He refers to the principles behind the rights and laws

> as reconstituted in the civilised States of the Continent... principles which, being grounded on universal Reason, cannot always remain so foreign even to the English understanding, as as they have been hitherto.

He then goes on to say that the *novi homines*, whom the Duke of Wellington rightly fears, will make use of these principles in "opposition to the government and the existing order of things; and the principles themselves would have to appear not in their practical truth and application, as in Germany (*sic!*) but in the dangerous form of French abstraction." It was, I have argued, to combat the appeal of "French abstractions," which tested principles by their empirical consequences in the everyday life of the people, that Hegel elaborated his organic logic.

2. Compare Hegel's position with the views expressed by Paine on the nature of the state and government. To Paine they are at best

SIDNEY HOOK'S *article on Hegel was published in the January 1965* ENCOUNTER; *the comments by Dr. Shlomo Avineri (Hebrew University, Jerusalem) and Dr. Z. A. Pelczynski (Oxford) appeared in November 1965 and March 1966. Professor Hook is Chairman of the Philosophy Department of New York University.*

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necessary evils: to Hegel, divinely blessed and the condition of all virtue. When the liberal descendants of Paine learn that state and government must have positive and not merely restraining functions this is interpreted in a purely instrumental and utilitarian sense utterly foreign to Hegel's fetishism of the state as a "supreme and absolute end-in-itself."

But the starkest contrast is to be found in their attitudes towards monarchy. Paine regarded the English Constitution as compounded of two tyrannies and one principle of republicanism. The tyrannies are monarchical and aristocratic; the republican element is embodied in the Commons "on whose virtue depends the freedom of England" (*Common Sense*). Hegel would have strengthened Paine's two principles of tyranny with the sole provision that they be exercised with Reason (which is decidedly *not* common sense). For Paine, monarchy is an evil and hereditary succession, a folly. He observes sardonically "nature disapproves hereditary right in kings, otherwise she would not so frequently turn it into ridicule, by giving mankind *an ass for a lion*."

Now turn to Hegel's *Rechtsphilosophie* (Sec. 275 ff.) in which by the most specious reasoning that ever disgraced a philosopher, he tries to "prove" by Hegelian logic that state sovereignty must be embodied not merely in an individual, not merely in a monarch, but in a hereditary monarch! No wonder Hegel declares that this feat is beyond the power of "the understanding" (281).

> The majesty of the monarch is a topic for thoughtful treatment by philosophy alone, since every method of inquiry, other than speculative method of the infinite Ideas which is purely self-grounded (Reason), annuls the nature of majesty altogether.

It is difficult to tell what is more nauseating in writing of this kind—its sycophancy or its obfuscation. Were it not for their impassioned earnestness about Hegel's liberalism and basic affinity to Paine, I would suspect my critics of a sly joke.

3. Hegel explicitly criticises the philosophy of liberalism, identifying it not only by doctrine but by name. The trouble with liberalism, as Hegel sees it, is that it is too empirical; it wants individuals to rule as well as to be ruled. Not satisfied with the corporately organised state in which all citizens have reasonably determined functions, rights, and duties, under the influence and leadership of the intelligent members of the community,

> *Liberalism* sets up in opposition to all this the atomistic principle, that which insists upon the sway of individual wills; maintaining that all government should emanate from their express power and have their express sanction. (*Philosophy of History.*)

One may choose to defend Hegel's "enlightened" bureaucratic absolutism out of fear of "the dictatorship of the majority" but it is a crude terminological impropriety to call it "liberalism." From the time of Paine and Jefferson to the present, liberals, although aware of the dangers of popular government, have had greater faith in the judgment of the citizenry *where a free market in ideas obtains*, than in the dictatorship of *any* minority.

4. A sharp light on Hegel's "liberalism" is thrown by his attitudes towards, and behaviour in, Prussia. "Prussia is a dirty word nowadays," complains Dr. Avineri in his attempted whitewash of Hegel's role as a philosophical watchdog of the Prussian régime. It was what happened in Prussia in Hegel's time that made Prussia a by-word in the liberal circles of the day. It was Hegel's ignoble behaviour in contrast with thinkers like Schleiermacher, Humboldt, de Wette, and others that left an ineradicable stain on his name.

Hegel accepted the call to the University of Berlin *after* the Prussian restoration had begun —*after* the Wartburg Festival when the persecutions of those who called for a unified and constitutional Germany were at their height—and after the infamous rescript of Frederick William III of 21 March 1818, in which in crude and arrogant language the people were told that only the King in his own good time would redeem his promise to grant a constitution, and sternly warned that even a *petition* for a constitution "would awaken my well-founded displeasure." The repressive Carlsbad Decrees were in the offing. They were promulgated before Hegel sent his *Rechtsphilosophie* to the press and supported by him. As von Stein's letters make clear, Dr. Avineri to the contrary notwithstanding, this was *not* "the reformed, enlightened Prussia" for which the liberals had striven.

Absolutist governments have a keen eye for the uses of ideology. When such a régime gives official approval and support to a philosophical doctrine, this is far more weighty evidence of its social significance than the intentions of its propounder or the excuses of apologists. In the secret state archives of Prussia, Heinrich von Treitschke found a letter from Altenstein (the Prussian Minister of Education) to the King of Prussia, written after Hegel's death, in which he wrote:

> In the Prussian State a solidly founded philosophical system has now put an end to arrogant and deplorable doings. The ministry cannot extend its aegis over any other philosophy and least of all over that of Schelling." (*History of Germany in the 19th Century*, vol. 5, p. 590.)

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This reference to Schelling, who was then passed over for an Hegelian nobody, is doubly significant. For in the early forties, when the Hegelian philosophy had been discredited at Court because of the young-Hegelian revolt and Schelling began to develop the reactionary views of his *Offenbarungphilosophie*, he was called to Berlin and new appointments *denied* to Hegelians in any field except aesthetics.

We did not have to wait, however, for revelations from secret archives to know what the Prussian government thought of Hegel. Rosencranz, Hegel's biographer, published a letter from Altenstein to Hegel (24 August 1821) after the appearance of the *Rechtsphilosophie* in which Hegel is warmly praised for conceiving the function of philosophy to be the discovery of Reason in nature, history, and the present, and thus preventing the public from applying "arbitrary ideals to the State." Dr. Avineri is undoubtedly aware of the letter since Haym also refers to it (*Hegel und seine Zeit*, p. 367) as the one in which Hegel is officially proclaimed "the Prussian Restoration State Philosopher."

Instead of addressing himself to evidence of this character, Dr. Avineri quotes some reactionary, if not crackpot, denunciations of Hegel to suggest that Hegel's philosophy is "totally alien to the Prussian tradition" and "totally inimical to the Prussian State." I find this procedure intellectually scandalous. Unless Dr. Avineri has evidence to the contrary, we have every reason to assume that Altenstein and the Prussian police bureaucracy were more qualified judges of what was inimical to the Prussian state than hysterical political and religious fundamentalists. The fact that a conservative is attacked by reactionaries does not transform him into a liberal! I wonder whether, *e.g.*, Eisenhower, who is a simple-minded conservative, will be hailed as a liberal by some future Dr. Avineri because he has been denounced by the head of the John Birch Society as a Communist!

5. Not only did Hegel's thought become the house philosophy of the Prussian régime, Hegel's behaviour towards the liberals of his day (and especially J. F. Fries) represented a betrayal of liberal principles. As Rosencranz himself dolefully admits, Hegel's preface to his *Rechtsphilosophie* was considered an abomination in liberal circles during the whole of Hegel's subsequent life-time. Hegel had recalled his proofs from the printer in order to add a strong attack on Fries who had already been suspended from his post for his speech at the Wartburg Festival. Hegel sicked the police on to Fries, *not* because of Fries' racism—this is Dr. Avineri's red herring!—but, as Hegel himself explicitly declares, because Fries "did not blush" to express the following wicked ideas in a speech on "The State and the Constitution"!

> In the people ruled by a genuine communal spirit, life for the discharge of all public business would come from below; from the people itself; living associations, indissolubly united by the holy chain of friendship, would be dedicated to every single project of popular education and popular service.

Fries' intellectual crime, according to Hegel, is that he dissolves the mighty structure of the State in a brew of "heart, friendship, and inspiration." He is a menace because his philosophy lacks "reverence for law and for an absolute truth exalted above the subjective form of feeling." Since philosophy, Hegel goes on to say, can exist "only in the interest of the state," the government has a right to look into such dangerous ideas. Philosophers, in other words, are to function as members of the ideological police. Not only does Hegel approve of Fries' punishment but seems to be egging the régime on to go further and to imprison him.

The like of Hegel's behaviour cannot be found in subsequent philosophical history until the rise of the Soviet Union in which philosophy is also practised "only in the service of the state." To make matters worse—if that were possible—when a reviewer of the *Rechtsphilosophie* in the *Hallischen Allgemeinen Literaturzeitung* of February 1822, mildly protested against Hegel's kicking a man already down (*absichtliche Kränkung eines ohnehin gebeugten Mannes. Edel ist ein solches Betragen nicht . . .*), Hegel demanded that the government take action against the paper and the reviewer, Rosencranz, despite his loyalty to Hegel, has the good grace to be ashamed of Hegel's remarks about Fries and of his attempt to bring the police in to settle philosophical differences. Hegel was unblushingly conscious of the services he was performing for the régime in directing the ideas of the student youth along the right lines. (*Letter to Altenstein*, 3 July 1822.)

Why all this should leave me in Dr. Avineri's eyes a defender of the Wartburg Festival and its windy rhetoric, I cannot fathom. The question is whether the grounds on which Hegel condemned Fries and other participants illustrate a liberal philosophy or its profound absence. According to Avineri, Hegel attacked Fries "because his Wartburg Address was one of the worst demagogic, fanatical, obscurantist, and racialist outbursts of German chauvinism." How false this is Hegel's own words cited above show. There is something amusing about the idea of Hegel attacking anyone as an obscurantist. But not only is Avineri wrong about Hegel

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but in this instance about Fries, too. The most charitable interpretation of his remarks about Fries is that he has not read Fries' Wartburg Address, *An die deutschen Burschen*. It is a frothy talk about civic equality, truth, and German freedom. It invokes memories of the Battle of Leipzig and declares that the struggle for the liberation of the spirit begun by Luther is continuous with the struggle of the Netherlands and the U.S.A. *There is not a word about the Jews in it.*[1]

Space does not permit adequate discussion of the Wartburg Festival and the complexities of the *Burschenschaft* movement. In effect the meeting was a call for a democratic, unified, constitutional Germany and the participants were persecuted because of this. Only the desperate necessity of bolstering a predetermined thesis and not genuine inquiry could lead someone to believe that the architects of the Holy Alliance persecuted the *Burschenschaft* because it was reactionary. The Wartburg Festival was obviously marked by xenophobic, romantic *Schwärmerei* and the kind of Teutonic high jinks that can be quite dismal. But it could not have been as completely reactionary as Avineri implies. For in addition to burning the works of Professor Schmaltz (a court toady whose views were well suited to his name), the works of von Haller, whom *Hegel* attacked as a reactionary, were also burned. The Nazis, of course, have made bonfires of books completely unrespectable; but the practice was not uncommon among all political groups in the past.

6. Hegel's very *language* is one which no genuine liberal would employ. This is a psychological point but in a political context, where attitudes towards institutions are involved, it is not without significance. The inescapable overtones of language cannot be ignored. That no truly religious man (as Professor Bochenski observes of Ockham) in writing on logic would use, even for purposes of illustration, a blasphemous expression, I am uncertain. But I am confident that no genuine liberal could write of the state as Hegel did. "Man must venerate the State as a secular deity (*Irdisch-Göttliches*)" or "The march of God in the world, that is what the State is." (*Es ist der Gang Gottes in der Welt, dass der Staat ist.*)

7. It is not only Hegel's language but the substance of his position on key issues, too many to enumerate here, which betray his conservatism. For example, his defence of war as necessary for the health of the state; his view that history is the court of last judgment and that therefore every lost cause is an irrational one; his low opinion of freedom of the press and approval of the Carlsbad Decrees; his denigration of a truly representative legislature; his claim that the state has a right to *require* that individuals belong to some church; his view that constitutions are given by history, not made, and that every people gets the constitution it deserves; and his conception of education as "the transformation of the soul," a process by which the individuality of students is reduced to a point where they fit easily into the common cultural mould (a precursory expression of the view of the intellectual as "an engineer of the soul").

No thinker, of course, is all of a piece, and even a liberal is entitled to some conservative prejudices and gaucheries. But although it does not tell us everything about him or about his insights and influence in many different fields, it is hardly an exaggeration to say that with respect to his social and political thought, Hegel is the very model of a small-minded, timid Continental conservative. There is no more reason to regard Hegel as a liberal than Plato as a democrat.

EVEN WITHOUT the "external" evidence, an analysis of Hegel's leading ideas, which cannot be given here,[2] will show the essentially conservative strain of his thought. First of all, his theory of *Vernunft* has nothing to do with what is normally understood by "reasonable," even as a term for a family of meanings, and his *Freiheit* is just as foreign to what is normally meant by "freedom" in empirical affairs. The use of intelligence to maximise the possibilities of human freedom to which the philosophy of liberalism has always been committed is precisely what Hegel condemns as dangerous to law and order. He himself makes no bones about his belief that his "logic" is profoundly different "from the current logic elsewhere." The customary logic makes a sharp distinction between validity and history. Hegel's logic is nothing but the morphology of the historical process. In the end it is indistinguishable from a theodicy.

Hegel tries to wriggle out of the quietistic

[1] Fries *had* published a tract against the Jews but *not* on religious or racialist grounds. Like some other liberal, and socialist thinkers who ignored the cruel social conditions which compelled Jews to engage in commerce, Fries attacked them for their alleged economic role. In defending this calamitous lapse from otherwise liberal positions —Principal Knox refers to Fries as "an ultra-liberal thinker"—he wrote: "I really want Judaism to be reformed and abolished as a commercial caste (*Handelskaste*) so that the Jews can participate as fully qualified citizens of the State. . . ." (*Nachlass*, edited by E. Henke, p. 158.)

[2] I have touched briefly on them in my essay, "Hegel and the Perspective of Liberalism" in *A Hegel Symposium*, edited by D. C. Travis (University of Texas Press, 1962).

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consequences of his identification of the "actual" and the "reasonable" by metaphysical double-talk about the difference between mere "existence" and "actuality." But no operational indication is given of how to distinguish between what is apparently "actual" and really "actual" except the test of time, because even the apparently actual is logically necessary. Meanwhile, one waits on, and with, the *status quo*. Doctrinally, the only way Hegel escapes from the palpable absurdity of his pronouncements is to convert them into arbitrary tautologies. When the murky clouds of speculation lift, Hegel will always be found to be the philosopher-laureate of the Establishment.

According to Hegel, no one has a right to teach a society or state what it *should* be or to attempt to make the world more reasonable. This is the sin of liberals and reformers, those who always-know-better, who use abstractions as weapons to challenge existing institutions, unaware of the good reasons why things are as they are, and that in criticising the historical world they are criticising divine Reason whose cunning is unfathomable to common sense or to understanding, particularly British and French. To talk about the errors and crimes of history, to wonder about what would have happened if some event or action had not occurred, is to be guilty of subjectivism and impiety. For that would be equivalent to giving hints to the divine Spirit on how to improve the world. True piety consists in grasping and accepting the logic of historical development which both explains and justifies what is.

The position is obviously self-defeating since any rebel or reformer could claim to be the instrument of Reason or God, and who is to say him nay? Hegel, like all conservatives, is not opposed to past revolutions but only those that threaten us in the present. Nor is he opposed to reforms, only to those demanded by the masses. If anything needs to be done, those whom the "World-Spirit" has entrusted with the destinies of the people, either the officialdom or the great men, the Caesars of world-history, will do it. And no matter how they do it they must not be judged by ordinary principles of morality. "Nor must the litany of private virtues—modesty, humility, philanthropy and forbearance be raised against them." Does this sound like Locke, Paine, Jefferson, Bentham, Mill?

One could rest the whole case for the characterisation of Hegel's social philosophy as basically conservative, on his doctrine of *Sittlichkeit*. Hegel has some profoundly true things to say about the extent to which the forms and norms of the individual mind are determined by the institutional culture of society. But he dissolves the individual too much in the system of *Sittlichkeit* (the ethos or ethical use and wont of society). He exaggerates the harmonies and plays down the conflicts in the putative system. The result is that insufficient justice is done to the individual of creative moral insight, to the rebel, prophet, and nonconformist. There is a natural presumption that he is wrong; the bias of age-old experience is against him. The individual who breaks with the system of *Sittlichkeit* that nurtured him becomes, according to Hegel, not a free individual but no individual at all. He has as much "reality" as a point which is not on a line. He has become an abstraction; a difficulty; a brute negative existence. A highly idealised and unhistorical version of the Greek *polis* seems to be one of the models of Hegel's political thought. He is fond of quoting the ancients to the effect that virtue is living according to the customs of one's own people and community, or in his own words in the *Rechtsphilosophie*,

> virtue [is] the individual's simple conformity with the duties of the station to which he belongs . . . he has simply to follow the well-known and explicit rules of his own situation.

Woe to a society in which men try to change their station without the guidance of their betters! It is against the order of both Nature and Reason!

It should now be clear why Hegel is much closer to Burke than to Paine and Jefferson. Put a glaze of Reason on Burke's "prejudice" and "prescription," and we get Hegel's *Sittlichkeit*. Burke is wiser about history than Hegel because he is more empirical. There is hardly anything which Hegel's apologists have pleaded in behalf of Hegel's "liberalism" that defenders of Burke have not stressed in clarifying Burke's "conservatism" too.[3]

Dr. Pelczynski makes great ado about a passage in Hegel's *The German Constitution* in which Hegel recognises the right of the people to participate in government. He implies that I deliberately left this passage out to conceal the fact that Hegel believes in representative institutions. He is mistaken. The point of the matter is *how* the people are to be represented and the

[3] From a collection of Burke's writings nearest at hand, I quote the following editorial remarks: "Because Burke is a conservative, it is sometimes falsely assumed that he was a natural enemy of all revolution. That is not so. Burke's attack on the French revolution was not . . . a defence of history against reason. He was perhaps above all else a defender of reason. What he hated was rationalism . . . abstractions." And so on. (Bredvold and Ross, *The Philosophy of Burke*, Univ. of Mich. Press, 1960.)

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power of the assembly with respect to monarchy. In one sense "representative" institutions existed even under absolutist régimes. We must always ask: who selected the deputies, and what powers did they have? And if they are elected, how broad is the electoral base? Hegel's *Rechtsphilosophie* as well as his essay on "The English Reform Bill" makes emphatically clear how strongly he is opposed to *popular* representative responsible assemblies. The reason I did not interpret as Dr. Pelczynski did the long passage quoted by him from the *German Constitution* is the sentence that follows immediately after the passage, and which is part of the same paragraph. It reads: *"Most German states have representation of this kind"* (my italics). In other words, the representation advocated by Hegel, which, according to Dr. Pelczynski, proves that Hebel is a liberal, was the kind that already existed in most German states of the time. But most German states of the time were absolutist! We would not dream of referring to them as organised on liberal, no less democratic, lines. No wonder Dr. Pelczynski left that sentence out. For it reinforces the point that I made in my original article, that for all his talk about participation, politically, Hegel was more inclined to increase the power of royal rulers than the power of the people.

I COME FINALLY to the question of nationalism. Here I am at fault in not qualifying more carefully the sense in which I characterised Hegel as a nationalist. My hypothesis concerning the genesis of Hegel's philosophical system is that it was inspired by his desire to counteract or "purify" false ideas of freedom, French and German, which stood in the way of German *unification*. He was not a nationalist in the chauvinistic, expansionist sense. He could sometimes poke fun at German traits. By the time he criticised the agitation for German unification by the *Burschenschaften*, he had already developed his system. His criticism of that movement was due to his conservatism—his conservatism was more pronounced than his nationalism—to his loyalty to the Prussian State, and to his own cautious and fearful temperament. In his letters to Creuzer and Niethammer, he writes, complainingly:

> I am almost 50 years old and have spent 30 of them in this constantly stormy time of fear and hope. I hoped sometime to be shed of them. But now I see the situation will continue, yes, in certain dark hours it seems to one to be growing worse. (30 Oct. 1819.)
>
> You know I am on the one hand, a fearful (*ängstlicher*) man, on the other, I love peace; and it is no comfort to see every year a thunderstorm blow up even when I am convinced that at most only a few drops of passing rain will strike me. (9 June 1821.)

ONE COULD SAY of the nationalist movement that, like the romantic movement, it contained mystical, promethean, and demonic elements. But of Hegel's nationalism one could say what could never have been said of romanticism, it was a *philistine* nationalism.

The early years of German nationalism are complicated because it was a response to the excesses of the French Revolution and yet profoundly influenced by it in hopes that some of its driving spirit would lead to a better and freer Germany. Roughly three groups existed in Germany—those who defended the semi-feudal *status quo*; those who looked towards the unification and liberalisation of Germany; those who wanted just enough gradual reforms from above to forestall revolution on the French model. Hegel was of the last group and originally in favour of national unification but so fearful of the principles and slogans of freedom when used by the *Burschenschaften* that he played it safe and threw in his public lot with the officials of the enlightened bureaucratic Prussian police state, not all of whose actions, in the privacy of his study, he approved. He feared that the popular German movement for freedom would lead to the same results in Germany as in France where, as he put it,

> it was as underdeveloped and in its abstraction that it was there applied to actuality; and to make abstractions hold good in actuality means to destroy actuality. *The fanaticism which characterised the freedom which was put into the hands of the people was frightful.* (*History of Philosophy*, Vol 3, my italics.)

Dr. Avineri admits that Hegel was strongly for national unification when he wrote *The German Constitution* (1802), but interprets this as evidence of Hegel's liberalism, whereas I interpret his desire for a united Germany as originally a patriotic reaction to the terrible things the French troops were doing in Germany. Even Haym acknowledges Hegel's strong reaction against the political humiliations of the day but unfairly takes him to task because although Hegel called for a new Germany, he worked to accomplish it, not by action, but by metaphysical thought. "Unable to carry out his ideal into reality, he transforms reality into his ideal." Avineri vastly exaggerates "Hegel's hostile attitude to the German anti-French insurrection in 1813." He praises it in his *Antrittsrede* at Heidelberg and again at Berlin. To be sure, Hegel is often fed up with the excesses not only of the French troops but of all the allied troops, and especially the burden of quartering Russian and Prussian soldiers. His most ex-

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tended comment on Napoleon's surrender is his letter to Niethammer (29 April 1814) in which he proudly claims that he had already predicted the entire course of events *before* the battle of Jena and cites from the *Phänomenologie* as evidence. In other words, Napoleon, that "self-destructive genius," is seen, not as a liberator, but despite some good works as the final executor of the terror of reason unleashed by the Revolution. That Hegel admired Napoleon as a great historical figure without approving of French depredations in Germany is not inconsistent. It is not even necessary to endorse Plamenatz' statement that, "Hegel admired Napoleon as perhaps only a German is capable of admiring a conqueror of his country." Most of the crowned heads of Europe had the same ambivalent feelings towards him. Napoleon had murdered more people than Robespierre but they recognised in him the upstart who would have liked to be one of them.

Although Avineri admits that Hegel called for the unification of Germany in his *German Constitution*, he seeks to dismiss this as incidental. "What Hegel criticises is the *absence of any sort of political authority in Germany*." This is an absurd retort, for the point is that political authority did exist in the separate kingdoms of the Empire but not in the *whole*. Political authority could be established *only* by unification. Far from being peripheral that is the central point. For only such unification could prevent the dismemberment and continued humiliation of Germany at French hands about which Hegel is so eloquent. The evidence that Germany is no longer a state, according to Hegel, is the unsuccessful way in which it has waged war against the French invader because "a multitude of human beings can only call itself a state if it be united for the common defence of the entirety of its property." Because Hegel's motives for demanding the unification of Germany were different from those of the romantic, proto-racist troglodytes of his time is not a valid ground for denying the fact that he made such a demand or its significance for the genesis of his philosophy.

In saying that Hegel would have welcomed the Bismarckian unification—as he would have opposed the German Revolution of 1848 and supported Hugenberg's *Deutschnationale Partei* in 1932 (not the Nazis)—I thought I was saying the obvious. Even T. L. Haering, than whom there is no more pious admirer of Hegel, observes "that Bismarck to a large extent realised Hegel's ideas has often been noted" (*Hegel: Sein Wollen und Sein Werk*, Bk. II, p. 337), although Haering doubts that Bismarck, since his work did not endure, was a true Hegelian. But as far as the unification of Germany is concerned, all one need do is to read Hegel's extravagant praise of Machiavelli, to see that Bismarck in this respect (and not in this respect alone) fits Hegel's conception of a great statesman and patriot perfectly—blood, iron, fraud, passion, "ideals," and all. In saying that Hegel was a philosopher of the Bismarckian (and Wilhelmian) Establishment, I was *not* referring to Rosencranz' book or to Hegel as a German national cultural treasure on the order of Goethe. If Dr. Avineri had read what I wrote with more care, he would have noted that I referred to Hegel as the *Nationalstaatsphilosoph*, not as *Nationalphilosoph* (and saved himself the needless trouble of abusing Rosencranz). I am well aware that Hegel's technical philosophy was in almost total eclipse from 1840 to about 1910, when Dilthey and Windelband sparked the renewal of interest in Hegel's speculative thought; but Hegel's *political* philosophy, his *organic* theory of the state, his conception of *war* flourished. It remained the most influential political philosophy in Germany up to World War I.

One need not accept the exaggerated claims made by Heller in his *Hegel und der Nationale Machtstaatsgedanke in Deutschland* (1921) that Bismarck himself was influenced by Hegel, even though he couldn't read him, to recognise that Droysen, Duncker, Lasson, and especially Rössler, who was close to Bismarck, all avowed disciples of Hegel, exercised not only theoretical but immense practical influence. Friedrich Meinecke in his *Weltbürgertum und Nationalstaat* (1919) claims that the three men who contributed most to liberating Germany from its unpolitical romantic ideas and paved the way for the realistic politics of the pre-World War I era were Hegel, Ranke, and Bismarck. The socialist, J. Plenge (in his *1789 and 1914*) contrasted Kant as the leading exponent of the ideas of the French Revolution, abstract liberty, with Hegel as the philosopher of "organised liberty." "The opposition of the ideas of 1789 and 1914 in philosophy is the opposition between Kant and Hegel... between the atomic will and the well-coordinated partial self (*eingegliedertes Teil-Ich*)."

Dr. Avineri takes issue with my statement that Hegel was a nationalist from the very beginning of his career. I was referring to the *Constitution of Germany*, originally written in 1799. With a great show of correcting me, Avineri quotes a passage from the second part of Hegel's *The Positivity of the Christian Religion*, written in 1796, in which he repudiates the old German imagery as irrelevant to "our day." But Avineri remains tactfully silent about the fact that the paragraph concludes with the sentence, "Is Judea, then, the Teuton's father-

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land?" This question is asked in connection with the chief point of the essay: "How did Christianity Conquer Paganism?" Hegel's answer is that when the ideal of the state or nation disappears a people looks for other-worldly salvation.

> Greek and Roman religion was a religion for free peoples only, and with the loss of freedom, its significance and strength were also bound to perish....
>
> The idea of his country or his state was the invisible, and higher reality for which the individual strove.... Confronted by this idea his own individuality vanished.

The young Hegel rages almost like Nietzsche against Christianity.

> Christianity has emptied Valhalla, filled the sacred groves, extirpated the national imagery as a shameful superstition, as a devilish poison, and given us instead the imagery of a nation whose climate, laws, culture, and interests are strange to us.... Except perhaps for Luther in the eyes of the Protestants, what heroes could we have, *we who were never a nation? Who could be our Theseus?* [My italics.]

Hegel feels strongly about a German state and fatherland and makes unmistakably clear what is necessary to get it. One must fight for it! Christianity triumphed over Rome when "passive resistance" took the place of military service. Only when the Jews were subjugated by foreign nations, Hegel reminds us, were they offered a Messiah, but "they very soon discovered their ineffective messianic hopes and took up arms." They fought to remain a state! With an eye obviously on Germany, he adds: *"A nation to which this is a matter of indifference will soon cease to be a nation."* Hegel praises the Jews very highly for going down fighting to preserve their national independence. The Jews "would stand above the Greeks and Romans, whose cities outlived their politics, *if the sense of what a nation may do for its independence were not too foreign to us...."* There is a continuity between what I called Hegel's nationalism in the *Constitution of Germany* and some elements in his *Early Theological Writings*.

In conclusion, I see no reason to alter my view that Hegel was a national, conservative thinker. I believe this throws light on the genesis of his system. The validity, however, of Hegel's many insights into the nature of human culture is independent of his politics and personality, neither of which is very admirable.

Sidney Hook

LETTERS

Nabokov's Onegin

I suppose every translator dreams of writing a version that will stand on its own feet, new, important, and yet relentlessly loyal to its original. In poetry this is almost impossible, and perhaps even in prose. Something very odd and catching has happened in Nabokov's *Onegin,* or so it seems to the reader with no Russian. Maybe a merely literal and literate prose reproduction rightly struck Nabokov as an appallingly commonplace assignment, and a stifling test for his zany genius. What he has written is a weirdly eccentric minor English poem, one that suggests that Pushkin's *Onegin* is not, as everyone claims, a national classic, but some wildly queer miscarriage, like Marvell's *Appleton House,* a poem whose idiosyncratic freshness is so peculiar that it reduces the translator often to a stutter of whimsicality and gristle. It's as though Nabokov swore to be faithful, and then felt that faithfulness would only bring him one of those coarse plaster busts of Homer, that doom of the usual conscientious translator. And aren't there dark moments when almost anyone suspects that most of the official classics are plaster busts? Yet both commonsense and intuition tell us that Edmund Wilson must be nine-tenths unanswerable and right in his criticism of Nabokov. The long arguments about Russian gerunds, the devious dictionary meanings of English and Russian words, etc., cannot conceal what is obvious, that Nabokov's *Onegin* is really, and perhaps only half intentionally, a spoof at its readers, rival translators, Pushkin, and Nabokov himself.

Robert Lowell

New York

Mr. Lowell's intuitional (but hardly commonsensical) arithmetics cannot interest me since he does not know Pushkin's language and is not equipped to tackle the special problems of translation discussed in my article. I wish though (as intimated therein) that he would stop mutilating defenteless dead poets—Mandelshtam, Rimbaud, and others.

I am glad that Mr. Paul Fussell [Encounter, April] has nothing against my notes on prosody provided they remain attached to a work of repelling length and limited appeal. I am amused by his objecting to them when published in the form of a separate, easily available little volume. In my turn, I object to his assuming that my dislike for the French pseudo-classical style as borrowed and reworked by English poets is based "on the eighteenth century's performance in tetrameter verse." Before dragging in Pope's pentameter and Sterne's prose in redemption of a literary era, he should have looked up what I say about Pope

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and Sterne in my *Eugene Onegin* commentary. I do not know who "Baron Corvo" and (Professor?) Firbank are, or what bearing "Camp" (Campus?) products have on the texture of tetrameters; but I am quite certain that there is no connection between random samples of tetrametric rhythms as discussed in a serious study and what Mr. Fussell comically calls the "overtones of the English Protestant sense of duty." The presence or absence of scuds in a given passage may often be accidental but only a philistine can assert that the accidental is "undiscussable." If Mr. Fussell is puzzled by my having had to invent terms for new or unfamiliar concepts, it only means that he has not understood my explanations and examples. The purpose of my little investigation was to describe (*not* to "interpret") certain aspects of verse structure. I suspected that my views would irritate the conservative professional in his fondly tilled field, but I was hardly prepared for the sparkling flow of academic *kitsch* with which Mr. Fussell now regales me.

VLADIMIR NABOKOV

Montreux

Leach's Reply

TO REPLY to Dr. Jarvie's reply [April]: obviously we could keep this up for ever. My opponent has changed his front. He now wants to draw a subtle distinction between Frazer's academic reputation and the "true evaluation" of his contribution to anthropological knowledge. Only Dr. Jarvie, of course, can make that evaluation. This is not where we started. Dr. Jarvie's book begins by representing Frazer as the head of an academic lineage which included Haddon, Rivers, Seligman, Spencer, Gillen, Malinowski, and Radcliffe-Brown, and by affirming that the two last named, at a date unspecified, "tried to overthrow the influence of clever dons like Frazer." In contradiction I affirm that this is a completely ludicrous misrepresentation of the facts of anthropological history.

Malinowski himself, who had read *The Golden Bough* while convalescing in a German hospital around 1908, always claimed that he found Frazer's writings inspiring; Spencer and Gillen, whose principal researches were conducted in 1896, were Frazer's disciples but not his pupils; the influence of Frazer on any of the other persons named seems quite minimal. Dr. Jarvie complains that I fail to show that Frazer "was not the leader of the anthropological world" around 1923. Surely the onus is on Dr. Jarvie to show that he was? Faced with such a task an historian would presumably consult the anthropological journals of the period. This I have in fact done, and Dr. Jarvie has not. I have been astonished to find how infrequently Frazer's name is mentioned at all. *The Golden Bough* is cited now and again as a convenient source book but Frazer's theories hardly get a mention.

My explanation of this fact is that Frazer had no theories of his own and that serious scholars preferred to refer back to more original sources such as Tylor and Robertson Smith. Dr. Jarvie prefers to think that Frazerian thought had been so assimilated into the intellectual *Zeitgeist* that his arguments were taken for granted; I suggest that the onus of proof is on Dr. Jarvie. Dr. Jarvie further complains that I do not criticise Frazer's theories in detail; since I deny that Frazer had any originality, this is hardly surprising. In the particular case of *Totemism and Exogamy* (1910) Frazer's three theories of the origin of totemism were based on (*1*) the theory of the external soul, an argument earlier advanced by Clodd, Wilken, and Tylor; (*2*) the functional theory of totemism which was later in different versions adopted by both Goldenweiser and Radcliffe-Brown but which had originated in a paper by Spencer and Gillen dated 1899 (Frazer apparently found this theory preferable to (*1*) but had already abandoned it by 1905 before there had been any public discussion of the subject); and (*3*) the conception theory of totemism which is a generalisation based on two sets of ethnographic facts observed by Spencer and Gillen in Central Australia and Rivers in the Banks Island. This theory was actually first published by Hartland though we must presumably accept Frazer's almost too vigorous affirmation that he thought of it independently (*Totemism and Exogamy*, Vol. IV, p. 62, footnote).

I cannot believe that Dr. Jarvie is serious in suggesting that I should offer to readers of ENCOUNTER "critical discussion" of these theories. If Frazer's third theory never received much serious attention, Dr. Jarvie is quite free to resurrect it, but the main reason for this neglect was that already in 1910 Goldenweiser had published his massive *Totemism, an Analytical Study*, which persuaded almost everyone that the whole basis of Frazer's work on the subject was illusory. "When approached analytically, totemism, which in its elements presents nothing unique or specific, tends to disappear, partly or wholly." It is precisely because professional anthropologists already understood this in 1910 that Frazer's "influence" thereafter was so slight.

AS TO THE CLASSICISTS, if Dr. Jarvie read the stuff instead of talking about it, he would readily see that while Jane Harrison's *Prolegomena* (1903) is heavily influenced by Frazer, *Themis* (1912) takes all its anthropological cues from Durkheim. Gilbert Murray and Cornford in this respect followed Jane Harrison, and their successors rejected the liaison with anthropology altogether. If M. I. Finley is to be rated a Frazerian I give up.

The fact that Malinowski read *The Golden Bough* in hospital in 1908 and was thereafter grateful for the experience is no more evidence of Frazer's enduring influence than is the assertion of a colleague of mine that it was the accident of his coming across a copy of the abridged edition of *The Golden Bough* in a prisoner-of-war camp in 1943 that led him to become an anthropologist!

"Guessing." Yes, theories are guesses but there are profitable guesses and useless ones. It is useless to guess about historical events which could in no circumstances ever be demonstrated, which is what Frazer habitually did. Malinowski made guesses

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about how the observable facts might be expected to fit together; he never made guesses about the facts themselves. Dr. Jarvie can guess that Frazer was either an unqualified atheist or a qualified theist: that is his affair. Apparently he is prepared to do both. The first proposition is demonstrably false, the second is meaningless and untestable.

EDMUND LEACH

King's College,
Cambridge

Venus at Large

JACQUES BARZUN writes [ENCOUNTER, March]: "It has been argued—most recently by Mr. Wayland Young in *Eros Denied*—that the impasse we have reached about sex in life and letters is due to the rejection of the common words and phrases, neither technical nor euphemistic, that relate to the sexual act. And we are urged to rehabilitate them for all spiritual and literary purposes."

There's no *impasse* in life and letters; let's say a confusion and worry. I don't say that this confusion and worry is due to the rejection of the common words; I say that the rejection of the common words is part of the confusion and worry. Not a cause: a symptom, among other symptoms.

And Doris Lessing didn't actually keep a Golden Notebook; she wrote a novel about a character who kept a Golden Notebook.

Sex is a matter which Europeans and Americans have not been allowed to publish about for a century and a half. Now that they are allowed to start again, there is naturally a backlog and a certain creakiness. And because there is so little experience in reading about it, so small a common stock of concepts, critics and reviewers often make mistakes about texts which would be found clear enough if the matter were anything else.

WAYLAND YOUNG

London

I GLADLY accept Mr. Wayland Young's interpretation of his own book, though not of the situation, literary and psychological, which he sums up again in the last paragraph of his letter. I do not think that what we face is a sort of infant endeavour that will perfect itself with age.

As for Mrs. Lessing's novel, I am pleasurably familiar with its contents, and my way of referring to it was no misconception of its title or authorship but a short-hand allusion—as when one speaks of "Dante's journey through Hell."

JACQUES BARZUN

Columbia University,
New York

Crisis in Whose Soul?

A Reply to David Caute — By LIONEL BUTLER

TWO MONTHS have gone by since Mr. David Caute ["Crisis in All Souls," ENCOUNTER, March] published his criticisms of All Souls College, Oxford, and his reasons for resigning his Fellowship. The College's Estates Bursar has printed [April] a brief refutation of one crucial point in Dr. Caute's argument. No one else, I think, has replied at all. I am a former Fellow of All Souls (a "Quondam"), and have been wondering whether I have any right to put forward my own comments. Certainly I took and could take no part in the College meetings whose secrets Dr. Caute so boldly exposes. To intervene is to risk the disapproval of ex-colleagues who may prefer that I should mind my own business. To keep quiet would be among other things to leave undefended the reputation of a friend. But there are considerations no less important than Warden Sparrow's good name for not leaving Mr. Caute unchallenged. Oxford itself should find no difficulty in evaluating what he has written; but evidence is steadily accumulating that, if passed over without comment, his version of "the All Souls crisis" is likely to be widely accepted —outside Oxford—on both sides of the Atlantic. That is not surprising. Most people's ideas of All Souls in the 'sixties have been spiced by the snide prattle of Sunday columnists ("a corner of the Establishment" . . . "stinking rich") and coloured by writings which have bracketed the College's name with the Appeasers of the Baldwin Era. Small wonder if ENCOUNTER's readers now succumb to Dr. Caute's picture of a great foundation "maximising its rents," perversely jibbing at putting its wealth wholeheartedly at the service of learning and education, and tamely yielding the helm to "an intelligence whose subtlety has long been at the service of the motto *non movere*. . . ."

The issue is whether All Souls is deploying its revenue aright. Having neither undergraduates nor graduates, but enjoying a buoyant income, it is obviously called upon to show that it is doing something significant for Oxford. Dr. Caute claims that it "fails to spend £38,000 per annum." It is true that the last decade has brought the College big increases in income—from dividends, from rents, from agricultural estates—though no one would fail to call All Souls a conscientious landlord. But whether or not buoyancy continues, the Estates Bursar has made it publicly clear that though there is a capital sum for new building, the financing of significant new academic developments depends not on any surplus—for he says there is none—but on future expansion of revenues. That the All Souls of the 'sixties has been in a

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position to expand academically is common ground. But expand in what direction? A scheme for incorporating graduate students into the College?

A key fact is that the College, rich in money, is cramped for space. Behind Hawksmoor's imposing façade the hall and kitchen and common rooms are commodious but hardly on the grand scale. And, hemmed in tightly as it is by neighbouring colleges, All Souls can do no more within its own walls than increase the accommodation by about one-fifth: and this mainly if a heavy load of new building is erected right across one of the most beautiful of Oxford's more informal quads. All Souls was never in a position to lodge a significant number of graduates within the College, or even feed them and give them common-room facilities there without jeopardising what any Oxford college would understandably seek to safeguard, the ordinary comfort and privacy of its Fellows and their communal life. One can easily forecast the resentment and tension which an offer to the graduates of some of the facilities some of the time would have provoked; and graduate students are said to be prone anyway to feel left outside the collegiate world of undergraduate and don. The situation pointed to the establishment of a satellite for All Souls—a hall of residence for graduates on a site apart from the College.

To build a residence for only a small number, say thirty or forty, though financially feasible, would have looked like a very meagre contribution towards Oxford's problem of the rapid increase in its graduate student population, which is expected to reach over 3,000 in a few years. Nor is a small residence financially viable these days. The point is that if you are going to construct refectories, kitchens, and common rooms, you ought to employ this expensive plant for at least one hundred graduates if you are not to lose money heavily. Even the residence for one hundred is extravagant to build. In 1963, when I was visiting British civic universities and looking at their building plans, it was very striking that over 90% of all residence construction was for communities of 250 students or more. There may be something for Oxford to ponder here. Still, All Souls would not have been unjustified in building a residence for 100 graduates—but a special problem arises. An Oxford college is an independent corporation within the University (there is some analogy with the relationship between States and the Union in North America) and so its buildings cannot be paid for out of the Treasury grants which the University Grants Committee dispenses to all British universities. And Oxford colleges, though forced to pay for new residential building out of endowments and benefactions, in practice spend on it nearly twice as much per student place as do the universities which have to finance their new residences out of government money strictly rationed according to U.G.C. scales. In Oxford a man gets living space easily double the area of a Redbrick man's study-bedroom of about 100 square feet. Whatever one thinks of this startling differential, the bulk (at least) of Oxford residential accommodation built since the war has been constructed on the more generous scale. So it would hardly have been realistic for All Souls, which had been advised that it would be expected to give its graduates no less than what a college such as Nuffield gives, to consider a cheaper building. In Scotland we are about to put up a residence for 250 students, some of them graduates, a Warden, and five dons. £400,000 was allocated for this project—and shortly afterwards the U.G.C. *reduced* its scales! But an All Souls residence for no more than 100 graduates would presumably have cost up to £250,000. The College would have been hard put to it to find that sum. Altogether, once the Fellows had taken a long look at their graduate scheme, most of them began to doubt whether investment in a residence and the administrative costs of running it would produce commensurate benefit to Oxford.

IT LOOKS AS THOUGH Oxford's best solution is the graduate college which is a *new* foundation, with a whole consortium of existing colleges feeding it with money and students. The £88,000 which Dr. Caute tells us All Souls recently gave away went to graduate colleges of this kind, though this could not be called an expansion by All Souls of its own activities. But meanwhile there was the project for which Dr. Caute was so enthusiastic—the joining of All Souls with St. Antony's, which was searching for capital to build with. On the evidence, the St. Antony's plans, though flexible, always needed more from All Souls than the Bursar said All Souls could find. One is tempted to suggest that after all the new St. Antony's building could have been designed in something like accordance with U.G.C. standards. This would have been a brave if austere new departure for Oxford: it need not have entailed poor architecture although quarters would have been cramped. Even so, the buildings would have been physically part of St. Antony's College and it was feared that the students, though forming a heavy charge on the revenues of All Souls, would belong to All Souls only in name. Far-reaching financial help to St. Antony's was a noble end, but it would have crippled any future All Souls attempt to develop new projects of its own.

How All Souls should expand in the next few years had been throughout for the College to decide. Of course, great sacrifices could have been made to aid St. Antony's. Of course, an independent graduate scheme of sorts (perhaps a so-called Student House, *i.e.*, a simple block of small apartments in a converted Victorian mansion with modern additions, the humdrum and workaday focus of a graduate society guided and subsidised by All Souls) could have been got off the ground. But to an observer it seems eminently reasonable that All Souls should have rejected both schemes, the more so as one gathers from Dr. Caute that the policy reversal was largely brought about by his more experienced academic colleagues, the very people who knew most about graduate students and who would have been called on to see that the chosen scheme operated successfully. To think of the original declaration of intent made to Lord Franks as a solemn undertaking (can one make *promises* to a commission of inquiry?) seems crass. The worst the Fellows can be charged with

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is having decided on their graduate policy before they had studied all its implications. Their re-appraisal must have been painful and was to their credit. And the majority of 35 to 22 (Dr. Caute supplies the figures) suggests that the College had made up its collective mind decisively.

BRITISH UNIVERSITIES today are notoriously starved of senior research posts. Much is done already for graduate students, very little for the lecturer or professor who needs a short-term research fellowship to complete and publish his contributions to his subject. For this, he is best advised to repair to the United States. I do not believe that if any university outside Oxford contained an institution like All Souls, it would stand for a successful movement to cut down its research potential in the name of radical reform, though in fact in the interests of a pedantic standardisation. All Souls may be in need of some changes.[1] But I am surprised that Dr. Caute emphasises the slowness of the increase in the number of Research Fellows in past decades while underrating the seriousness of current efforts to strengthen the College's main role as a place of advanced study. All Souls has seventeen University Professors and seventeen Research Fellows (several more if one counts academic Examination Fellows). The Research Fellows contribute lectures, tuition, graduate supervision. There is no question of their being as a group withdrawn from the University and its needs. They never have been. They play a distinctive part in Oxford's teaching.

The decision to expand and diversify by bringing in Visiting Fellows as against graduates will only win applause outside Oxford. All Souls, perhaps nearing its optimum complement of full Fellowships, is offering a share in its benefits to scholars from other universities in this country and abroad. Dr. Caute does not seem to me to do justice to this project. There is nothing else like it in Great Britain. It will encourage and assist scholars to get sabbatical leave and spend it in Oxford pursuing their researches in excellent libraries and in association with other workers in their field. They may include members of other professions and artists and writers. There will be no problem of integrating them into All Souls life. The problem of their accommodation is already being solved. Their numbers can be expanded considerably if the College's income rises: the scheme is flexible. Oxford itself should profit from the presence of these visitors. Exchanges of teaching staff between one British university and another, as in the United States, may be stimulated by what All Souls is proposing to do. And in 1980 there should be 100 or 150 dons in British or foreign universities who have gained significantly from the assistance of an All Souls which was little more than a legend or a curiosity to most of them in the past.

MY OWN BELIEF is that All Souls, choosing from among equally worth-while schemes, has quite justifiably opted for the most practicable and valuable. That this will expand a *traditional* college role, the advancement of research, has apparently displeased Dr. Caute, who makes an interesting revelation when he writes of his own desire to effect "a change in the structure and outlook of All Souls." It was clearly root-and-branch reform or nothing that he wanted. Oxford colleges are democracies, far more so than universities outside Oxford. So are we to believe that 57 voting Fellows, perceptive, vocal and tough-minded, allowed a Warden whose *influence* may (or may not) be like that of some great Venetian Doge of old but whose formal *powers* are very closely limited, to play for time "until the appetite for change subsided" and then to manipulate them with a master's hand on the day of the crucial vote? If so, All Souls has lost most of its backbone in recent years. No doubt all this, if true, would be in a way flattering to Mr. Sparrow's abilities. But Dr. Caute has implied clearly that the Warden's first adoption of the graduate scheme was a cynical dodge. I know John Sparrow as well as Dr. Caute knows him: the aspersion is at variance with the truth.

LIONEL BUTLER

University of St. Andrews, Scotland

[1] That it should reserve so many places for non-academics clearly arouses more questionings these days than it did forty years ago. But the non-academics Fellows gave much to the College in my day, the post-war years: a contribution not to be weighed in terms of the holding of occasional seminars, as Dr. Caute implies it should be. We were, just for instance, very lucky to have a remarkably strong and fair chairman in the elder statesman who presided over the long debates which preceded the election of two successive Wardens in the same twelve-month. One would hope that the College would always retain as Fellows some of the men from the Outside World.

Words, Words

IT IS, I suppose, mildly encouraging to learn [ENCOUNTER, March] that the islanders on Elba are learning to live with that old Napoleonic palindrome, "ABLE WAS I ERE I SAW ELBA." What hope this can give to wide circles who have been caught in this kind of forward-backward spelling dilemma! The Two Cultures school: "SUMS ARE NOT SET AS A TEST ON ERASMUS." The London literary set—"DENNIS AND EDNA SINNED." With anagrams and antigrams—as the book, *Language on Vacation*, by Dmitri Alfred Borgmann (positive anagram: GRAND MIND, MORTAL FIBRE!; negative anagram: DAMN MAD BORING TRIFLER!) recently showed—it has been worse, and things will obviously improve for talkers and for doctors. "CONVERSATION: VOICES RANT ON." "MEDICAL CONSULTATIONS: NOTED MISCALCULATIONS." There may even be hope for the Teutons and Slavs who have long suffered from the classic sentence (they're both involved through "word surgery," *i.e.*, eliminating the first letter of each word

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and re-reading: "SHOW THIS BOLD PRUSSIAN THAT PRAISES SLAUGHTER, SLAUGHTER BRINGS ROUT." It is almost encouraging enough to start evangelising but for the anti-grammatic warning: "EVANGELISTS—EVIL'S AGENTS."

TIMOTHY MANN

Chicago

Hegel, Fichte, Brecht

IT WAS REFRESHING to read the Hegel discussion in your pages. How much more interesting—and truthful—the history of ideas really becomes when it is rescued from the simple-minded propaganda of black-and-white historians! Think of the pitiful nonsense perpetrated by Mrs. Barbara Tuchman when, in her otherwise useful and readable best-selling book *The Guns of August*, she ventures into this kind of intellectual pseudo-genealogy:

> A hundred years of German philosophy went into the making of this decision [the invasion of Belgium in 1914] ... The voice was Schlieffen's, but the hand was the hand of Fichte ... of Hegel ... of Nietzsche ... of Treitschke ... What made the Schlieffen Plan was not Clausewitz and the Battle of Cannae, but the body of accumulated egoism which suckled the German people....

The truthful and sensitive historian demonstrates not only that this is not the way ideas and intellectual influence work, but also that this is not in point of fact how fateful war-making decisions actually happen in history. Professor Herbert Luethy put this eloquently in his ENCOUNTER essay on 1914 ("The Folly and the Crime, March 1965). I also recall the revealing story recorded in the recent English biography of *Haldane of Cloan* by Dudley Sommer (Allen & Unwin, 1960). During the formal visit of the British Secretary of State for War to the German Kaiser, Haldane, who had studied in Germany, wanted to take time out—the year is 1906—to pay his respects to some school-day idols.

> Haldane had a State carriage put at his disposal ... to drive to the old churchyard of the Dorotheen Kirche, where Fichte and Hegel lie buried. He found the tombs sadly neglected and, indeed, had great difficulty in finding anyone who knew the way to them. When he returned to the Palace he told the Emperor and the Empress of his sadness and disappointment, but the Emperor replied that these names were no longer of importance for Germany.

Lord Haldane suggested that he wouldn't mind adding to the Kaiser's *Heldenallee* two statues at his own expense, but the Kaiser could think only of "war poets" (like Körner), and that wasn't quite the point.

These are the ironic paradoxes of history and also "the difficulties of writing the truth" which Brecht —who today lies in the same churchyard of Berlin's Dorotheen Kirche—would have appreciated.

Cambridge MARTIN LAINE

AUTHORS

Gerald Scarfe, who is twenty-nine, has the reputation of being "the most interesting cartoonist in England," and his work was recently given a Journalist-of-the-Year award. His savage caricatures, especially in *Private Eye* but now also regularly in the *Daily Mail*, have more than a touch of Daumier and of George Grosz in the Berlin '20s. His portraits are (as Malcolm Muggeridge suggests — without having seen the Scarfe drawing of him on our cover this month or Scarfe's self-portrait, adjoining) usually in a milder mood.... The *Sunday Times* Colour Magazine has published a good many of his remarkable drawings, and in the U.S. he has appeared in *Esquire*, *Holiday*, and *Life*.... As he writes: "... I suffered from chronic asthma throughout childhood. Began to draw during long periods confined to bed.... Afraid I'm virtually untaught. No formal art training whatsoever.... Am always sincerely surprised by the sense of 'horror' some of my work has produced. Afraid I don't understand how it happens at all...."

Tom Driberg is Labour M.P. for Barking, Essex, and a member of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party. His recent book *The Mystery of Moral Re-Armament* was reviewed by Chaim Bermant in the January 1965 ENCOUNTER....

George Steiner's "Conversation with Claude Lévi-Strauss" which we published in April was originally broadcast in the BBC Third Programme, where it was produced by Leonie Cohen....

Robert Lekachman is Professor of Economics at the State University of New York (Stony Brook). His latest book is *Keynes & Keynesianism: Twenty Years After*; he also contributed a portrait of John Maynard Keynes to ENCOUNTER's "Men & Ideas" series (December 1963)....

THE by-line to the letter to *The Guardian* which we published in our April number (p. 86) was inadvertently omitted. That bit of literary detective work on the background of Sinyavsky-Daniel's "public accuser" was done by **David Burg**

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Marcus Cunliffe
Encounter, August 1965

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